



HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

Divya Darshan



Special edition of
Silver Jubilee Celebration 2023

Divya Darshan

*NA TU MAM SHAKYASE DRASHTUMANENAIV SVACHAKSHUSHA I
DIVYAM DADAMI TE CHAKSHU PASHAY ME YOGAMESHWARAM*

Your external eyes will not be able to comprehend my Divine form. I grant you the Divine Eye to enable you to behold Me in my Divine Yoga. Gita Chapter 11.

HHS CELEBRATED ITS 25 YEARS OF JOURNEY ON THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION OF GURU PURNIMA 2023.

**A book “25 Years Journey of HHS” was also published
and launched on this occasion.**

This Issue includes

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| 1-Guru Purnima appreciation | 2-Congratulatory messages of MPs and ministers |
| 3-This is the story of Hindu Heritage Society Inc | 4-The purpose and establishment of HHS |
| 5-Founders: | 6-Sponsors & contributors |
| 7-Four major annual events - flagship programmes | 8-Formation of youth circles |
| 9-Meet office Bearers of Hindu Heritage | 10 -Awardees who made the journey of Hindu Heritage Society more impactful. |
| 11-Our members and life members | 12-Certificate of appreciation |
| 13-Photo gallery of our presenters, musicians, and audience | 14-PM Narendra Modi during his May, 2023 visit to Sydney. |
| 15-HHS publications | 16-Memories of past Photo Gallery |
| 17-Annual Durga maha Pooja 2023 | 18-Your feedback |
| 19-Thank you for being part of HHS | |

About Hindu Heritage Society Inc.– This is our Story

Indian Diaspora in Australia

Migration has been a way of life for many Indian families. Some have settled in far-off lands, while others have returned home to India after years of living abroad. The Indian diaspora has made its mark all over the world, and the story of the Hindu community that settled in Fiji and then migrated to Sydney, Australia, is a remarkable one.

When the Hindu community arrived in Sydney, they were part of a growing Indian diaspora that had settled in the city. Despite being far from their homeland, they were determined to maintain their Indian identity and cultural heritage.

One organisation that played a vital role in helping the Hindu community in Sydney maintain their cultural identity was the Hindu Heritage Society.

The organisation was founded in 1998 under the guidance of Pandit Narayan Bhatt and Pandit Jagdish Maharaj, two renowned Hindu scholars and practitioners.

The Hindu Heritage Society provided a range of services to the Hindu community of Sydney, including priest services and the conducting of sacred Hindu ceremonies. This was particularly important for the community, which wanted to maintain their connection to their Indian roots and celebrate their cultural heritage.

Through the Hindu Heritage Society, the community was able to find priests who could perform traditional Hindu ceremonies for their family events like weddings, housewarming ceremonies, and other important occasions. They were able to celebrate their cultural traditions with their extended family and friends, even though they were far from home.

For the Hindu community, the Hindu Heritage Society was a lifeline. It helped them maintain their cultural identity and provided them with a sense of community in a new and unfamiliar place. Through their involvement with the organisation, they were able to connect with other Indian families in Sydney and forge deep and meaningful relationships.

The Hindu Heritage Society also organized cultural events, festivals, and celebrations that brought together the Indian community in Sydney in a spirit of unity and camaraderie. These events were an opportunity for the community to come together, share their experiences, and celebrate their shared heritage.

As the Indian diaspora in Sydney continued to grow and thrive, the Hindu Heritage Society played an important role in helping the community maintain their cultural identity and celebrate their heritage. Through their efforts, the organisation became a cornerstone of the Indian community in Sydney, forging a deep and lasting connection between the Indian diaspora and their adopted home.

25 YEARS INSPIRING JOURNEY OF HHS

The purpose and establishment of HHS,

The Hindu population in Australia was gradually increasing in the 1990s. Temples were being built and Hinduism was gaining momentum among Australians.

The Hindu population was coming from many different countries, however primarily from India, Nepal and Fiji.

Pt Narayan Bhatt (Shastri ji) along with Pt Jagdish Maharaj and others established the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) to address the cultural needs of the growing Hindu population in Australia during the 1990s. Despite the emergence of temples and the increasing popularity of Hinduism among Australians, the community lacked capable Priests and religious leaders, resulting in few activities.

The HHS began as the Indo-Australia Arts Education Centre (Kalaa Mandir Inc.) to promote activity-based practice and uplift cultural awareness. In 1998, the HHS showcased Hindu cultural values through various events, including the highly acclaimed "Sarva Dharma Sammelan" seminar, integrated with the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar, India, where sacred Ganga river water was arranged for blessings.

The management committee and community representatives realized that the name "Kalaa Mandir" limited the organization's potential for wider community involvement. In 2002, the HHS was re-named the Hindu Heritage Society Inc. with broader aims and objectives.

We shifted our focus to accommodate more activities.

To reflect our aims, we commenced with organising three major events every year.

- Saraswati Pooja for youth in January/February.
- Guru Purnima is our "Sanskriti Diwas" in July ,and
- Devi Jagran in September / October every year.

Later we have included two more annual functions: Holi festival and in 2022 Gita Jayanti.

These are the major festivals Hindu Heritage Society has been celebrating for the past 25 years in Australia.

We have conducted Shri Ram Leela, Shri Krishna Leela as well as Music and Dance classes. From 2021 we have been running weekly Gita Classes for members and non members of the Society.

The Society is not limited to Sydney, as we have also travelled to other locations, such as Victoria, Queensland, Canberra, Adelaide and even Northern Territory to help the organisations.

The Hindu Heritage Society has taken part in our share of community service through public events, by participating in major activities with other organisations, such as Hindu Council of Australia and other organisations to grow our culture and religion.

The Hindu Heritage Society has a dedicated team of Purohits and they are busy providing their religious services for the community regularly.

The Hindu Heritage Society has published numerous books, audio CDs, Videos, Magazine and conducted Radio programs to promote our rich heritage. The Society is growing and has been well received by the community.





HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY

Education, Art & Heritage

ABN: 60 486 249 887. Y 2943504

**Heartfelt Appreciation for Your Support on Guru Purnima 2023
and 25th Anniversary Celebration**

On behalf of the Hindu Heritage Society, we express our deepest gratitude and appreciation for your invaluable support and contributions during our Guru Purnima 2023 and 25th Anniversary Celebration.

As we celebrated Guru Purnima, a significant occasion that pays homage to our spiritual teachers, your presence and support made a profound impact on the success of the event. We are immensely grateful for your participation and the positive energy you brought to the celebration.

The Guru Purnima 2023 and 25th Anniversary Celebration was a momentous occasion for our organisation. It served as a platform to honour and express our heartfelt gratitude to our revered gurus and teachers. The event was a celebration of vibrant cultural performances and meaningful interactions.

We are profoundly grateful for your support and contributions, which played a crucial role in the success of the event. Your active involvement, through your presence, assistance and financial contribution, has made a lasting impact on our organisation and the community we serve. Your commitment to our cause and your dedication to promoting cultural heritage and spiritual values are truly commendable.

We would like to express our sincerest thanks for your generosity, support, and belief in our mission. Your contribution has not only helped us celebrate Guru Purnima but has also marked a significant milestone as we commemorated the 25th anniversary of our organisation. Your support has not only strengthened our organisation but has also contributed to the enrichment of our community as a whole.

On behalf of the Hindu Heritage Society, please accept our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support.

Your contributions have made a significant difference, and we deeply appreciate your partnership and involvement. We look forward to continuing our collaboration in the future as we work towards creating a society that embraces diversity, promotes cultural appreciation, and nurtures spiritual growth.

Once again, we extend our deepest thanks for your invaluable support. Your dedication and contributions will be cherished for years to come.

Warm regards,

Mrs. Prem Maharaj and Mrs Radhika Bhatt

Coordinators

HHS Guru Purnima 2023 and 25th Anniversary Celebration

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES FROM MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND MINISTERS.

HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY 25TH ANNIVERSARY & GURU PURNIMA CELEBRATIONS

THE HON PETER DUTTON MP LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION AUSTRALIA

On behalf of the Coalition, I congratulate the Hindu Heritage Society on your 25th anniversary. This significant milestone is testimony to the dedication and hard work of so many, for a quarter century.

My best wishes to your society too as it celebrates *Guru Purnima* in July. The festival – observed on the full moon day in the month of Aashaadha in the Hindu Calendar – is an occasion when Hindus, Jains and Buddhists pay respect to their academic and spiritual Gurus.

Swami Vivekananda, the great Hindu philosopher and spiritual leader, said “The Guru is the means of Realisation. ‘There is no knowledge without a teacher’”. May your teachers and mentors be warmed as you thank them for their guidance and wisdom on the occasion of Guru Purnima.

I also take this opportunity to commend the Hindu Heritage Society for your tireless efforts to promote Hindu heritage, arts and culture; and to thank the more than 684,000 Australians of Hindu faith for your contributions to our nation in many fields of Endeavor.

May the blessings of the divine be with you all as you continue your important work.

Hon Peter Dutton MP

Leader of the Opposition April 2023



The Office of the Prime Minister was approached to share a message however, they were not able to respond before the magazine went into print.



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION, CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY 25 YEAR SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION AND GURU PURNIMA

I extend my congratulations to the Hindu Heritage Society on your organisation's 25th Silver Jubilee celebration, and wish you a joyous Guru Purnima.

Over the past quarter-century, the society has enriched our community by sharing Hindu cultural values through a variety of community activities, festivals, and events that promote Hindu art and culture.

According to the 2021 Census, 684,000 people living in Australia identify as Hindu, hailing from all around the world. The rich history, culture, and traditions of Hinduism have become integral to our shared Australian narrative and enrich the diverse history of Australia.

Diversity is our nation's greatest strength. Australia's success as a multicultural nation is built upon efforts like yours to celebrate the richness of our cultural diversity, and to ensure that bonds of community are forged across various cultures.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy Guru Purnima, a day dedicated to celebrating and expressing gratitude to gurus, teachers, and mentors for the spiritual wisdom, guidance, and teachings they provide in shaping people's lives.

Thank you for your contributions to the Australian community. I wish your organisation continued success for the decades to come.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A Giles".

The Hon Andrew Giles MP

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

May 2023





Cr Donna Davis
Lord Mayor

Ref: LORDMAYOR/2023/00496

To the President and Members of the Hindu Heritage Society:

I congratulate the Hindu Heritage Society on the significant achievement of its 25th Silver Jubilee anniversary.

The City of Parramatta is proud of our ongoing connections with the Hindu Heritage Society and the broader Hindu community. Thank you for your tireless efforts in providing religious services as well as language, dance and music classes to the people of the City of Parramatta.

I acknowledge this is also the time of Guru Purnima, a spiritual festival held to honour teachers who have shared their wisdom.

May you continue to provide truth and inspiration in our community through religious and cultural activities in the years to come.

Yours sincerely,



Cr Donna Davis
Lord Mayor
City of Parramatta Council



The Hon Michelle Rowland MP

**Minister for Communications
Federal Member for Greenway**

Hindu Heritage Society 2023

To the Hindu Heritage Society,

It is my great pleasure to wish you a meaningful observation of Guru Purnima, 2023.

At this auspicious time, we are reminded of the immense value that our 'gurus' bring to our lives and ultimately, celebrate the guru-shishya relationship.

In a literal sense, 'gurus' may mean our teachers, professors or mentors. Or it can include our family members; our mothers, fathers or grandparents. These are the teachers who bring us into the world and provide crucial, formative life advice.

Indeed, these gurus may even be our children. My two daughters are often providing me with new ways to see the world.

Beyond this, we are also urged to recognise those in our lives who, perhaps indirectly, provide guidance to us – spiritual or practical - and act as role models.

On a personal level, I know that without both my parents, role models and mentors in my life, I would not be able to achieve what I have. These gurus in our lives should not be underestimated. They can allow us to be better people, reach new heights in personal development, and be better people.

These gurus in our lives should not be underestimated. They can allow us to be better people, reach new heights in personal development, and be better people.

May we all take this day as one to express gratitude for the gurus in our lives.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Rowland".

Michelle Rowland MP

FOUNDERS:



Pt Narayan Bhatt, (Shastri)

Registered Marriage Celebrant, (Civil & Religious)

Trustee: Hindu Heritage Society Inc.

Vice President: Australian Council of Hindu Clergy Inc.

Member: Brahman Purohit MahaSabha Inc.

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Shri Pt. Narayan Bhatt is the son of the famous Pujari, Pt. Jaidev Bhatt was born in Haripur, Uttarakhand, India. He brings with him a rich heritage from Kurmanchal Manaskhand and western Nepal. He obtained his Primary and Higher education from Haridwar Uttarakhand India. He has always followed in the footsteps of his father.

Pt Narayan Bhatt obtained his Shastri degrees from the Sampurnanand University of Varanasi in 1986. He has also obtained a Master's degree (MA) in Sanskrit from the Gurukul University of Haridwar Uttarakhand.

He has studied Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayan, Gita, Chanda Shasras, Kavya Shasrtas and other related Sanskrit literature. He narrates beautiful katha of Ramayan, Bhagwatam and Devi Bhagwatam. Shri Narayan ji has always had a passion for music and in 1989 he was awarded a Diploma in vocal music and Tabla from Prayag Sangeet Samiti Prayag Raj Uttar Pradesh India.

Shri Bhatt ji has also completed practical Training of Karmakanda of various sanskars and Anusthans conducted by the ministry of Human Resources in India. He is a Marriage Celebrant and conducts all kinds of Satwik Anusthans. (Purva Prayag)

He has been trained in a priest-hood since his teens. Pdt Narayan Bhatt has served the Hindu community of Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra since his arrival in Australia. He speaks fluent Hindi, English, Nepali, Gujarati and Sanskrit languages.

Pundit Narayan Bhatt is a well-respected figure in the Hindu community of Sydney, Australia, and his contributions to promoting Hinduism and its values have been commendable. In addition to founding and serving as the President of the Hindu Heritage Society Inc. (HHS), Pundit Bhatt has many associations with other well-known Hindu institutions of Sydney, such as the Hindu Council of Australia (HCA).

Pundit Bhatt has also served as a priest and religious leader for various Hindu temples and organizations across Sydney. His expertise in Vedic scriptures and rituals has made him a sought-after figure for conducting sacred Hindu ceremonies, such as weddings, yagnas, and pujas. He has also been involved in the establishment of new temples and religious centres, providing guidance and support to their founders and members.

Pundit Bhatt's commitment to promoting the values of Hinduism in Australia has earned him numerous accolades and recognitions. He has received awards from various organisations, including the Hindu Council of Australia and the Federation of Indian Associations of NSW. These awards are a testament to his dedication, hard work, and selfless service to the Hindu community.

His humility and gentle nature have endeared him to people from all walks of life. He is a source of inspiration to many Hindus who look up to him as a role model and mentor.





SHRIMATI RADHIKA BHATT

Radhika Joshi was born in Basod, a small village in the district of Pithoragadh in the state of Uttarakhand, India. She was raised in a close-knit family with a strong army background, where she learned the values of discipline, hard work, and empathy from an early age. These values have stayed with her throughout her life and are evident in her relationships with her family, friends, and the wider community.

Radhika's dedication to education has always been a key part of her life, and she continued her studies after settling in Sydney with her husband, Pandit Narayan Bhatt, in 1997. Her commitment to learning has helped her become an active member of the community, and together with her husband, Radhika became involved in various community projects, including the Hindu Heritage Society's annual functions and publications, which promote education, arts, and Hindu religious heritage.

Radhika's army background has also inspired her to serve her community as a social worker. She is known for her kindness and dedication, and is often seen at cultural events organized by various organizations. She has supported her involvement with organizations such as the Hindu Heritage Society, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and Hindu Council of Australia, volunteering her time to teach Hindu scripture to primary school children and promoting events to the general public. She is a regular volunteer at Sydney Sanskrit School and attends social functions organized by the Uttarakhand Association.

In addition to her community involvement, Radhika is a loving mother and empathetic friend who is well-liked by many. She has always been supportive of her family, and her children are a testament to her love and guidance. In her free time, Radhika enjoys attending social and religious functions such as Bhagwat katha, Ramayan Katha, Sundarkand path, and spending time with her friends. Her warm and caring personality makes her a joy to be around.

Radhika Bhatt is a remarkable woman whose journey in life has been nothing short of inspiring.

She is married to Pandit Narayan Bhatt, and she has been an integral part of her husband's work in the Hindu community. Her work has inspired many other women to act and make a positive impact in their own communities. Radhika's life is a reminder that with hard work, dedication, and the values, we can overcome any obstacle and achieve great things.





Pt. Jagdish P. Maharaj

Justice of the Peace

Authorised NSW Marriage Celebrant,

Trustee, Hindu Heritage Society,

V.P.- Sanatan Dharma Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha, Sydney, Australia.

Mobile: 0412 931 965. Phone: 02 9896 5156.

Pandit Jagdish Maharaj is the son of the late Shri Parmeshwar Dutt Maharaj and the late Sri-mati Jasoda Maharaj. He is the grandson of Pundit Gajadhar Maharaj, who came to Fiji under the Indenture system in 1914 from Ayodhya in India.

Prior to finally arriving in Fiji, Gajadharji had also travelled to Rangoon, Burma and Natal and South Africa. Pandit Jagdish was born in Nasinu, a suburb of the capital city Suva in Fiji. Punditji moved to and has resided in Sydney, Australia from 1992.

Punditji is a well-respected public speaker; he is also the co-founder of the Hindu Heritage Society Inc. Punditji is the co-author of numerous pooja texts and is the editor of Divya Darshan, a quarterly magazine published by The Hindu Heritage Society.

Currently he is a Trustee of the Hindu Heritage Society Inc., of which he is a founding member. He is also the Vice Patron of the Sanatan Dharma Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha of Australia. On various occasions Panditji has represented HHS in Hindu council meetings and other organisations.

Punditji has served the Hindu community of Sydney with distinction, dedication and devotion since his arrival here with his family and continues to offer his services to the community with pride. He has a good command and deep understanding of Shastras.

He is committed to preaching and promoting the Sanatan Dharam and conducts all forms of pooja and yagna.

He performed his very first Satyanarayan Katha and Hanuman Roth Poojan at the age of 14 years. He is a keen scholar of Hindi and Sanskrit and is well versed in the Ramayana, Shrimad Bhagwat Gita and other Hindu Religious texts.

Pandit Jagdish Maharaj, a highly esteemed figure, has been acknowledged for his remarkable contributions to the Hindu community. Through his dedicated efforts, he has played a significant role in promoting and uplifting the Hindu faith, both within Australia and beyond.

Punditji has received awards from the hindu council of Australia and BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha and other various organisations.

Punditji has represented Hindu Heritage Society on numerous occasions.

Pandit Jagdish Maharaj Ji's ancestors are from Ayodhya, Gaon - Hal-kara ke Purva, Jila - Faizabad India.

The Diaspora Foundation of New Delhi has released a book about the Migration Journey of Pandit Jagdish Ji and this is available to all.

तापमान	32.0 (अधि.)	15.0 (न्यून.)
आर्द्रता	90.0 (अधि.)	40.0 (न्यून.)

अयोध्या (फैजाबाद) जा

फिजी दंपती बोले, भारतीय होने पर नाज

♦ बचाए रखा भाषा और धर्म

मुकेश कुमार, फैजाबाद

25 वर्ष बाद मातृभूमि अयोध्या पहुंचे फिजी दंपति जगदीश महाराज एवं प्रमिला महाराज को भारतीय होने पर नाज है। वे कहते हैं कि 150 वर्ष पहले उनके पितामह बतौर गिरमिटिया मजदूर फिजी ले जाए गए थे। वे वहां बसे तो सबसे पहली चुनौती अपनी भाषा, बोली और धर्म यानी पूजन पद्धति बचाए रखने की थी।

फिजी में बसे भारतीय मूल के लोग इस चुनौती को सफलतापूर्वक अंजाम देने में कामयाब हैं। वे बताते हैं कि फिजी में हिंदी का रेडियो चौबीस घंटे व दो दैनिक समाचार पत्र सफलतापूर्वक निकल रहे हैं। इससे हिंदी दिन-ब-दिन युवा हो रही है। भारत आने का मकसद पूछने पर वे बताते हैं कि 25 साल बाद अपनी मातृभूमि व यहां तीर्थस्थलों के दर्शन को आए हैं। बालाजी, वैष्णोदेवी, हरिद्वार, काशी, अयोध्या में दर्शन पूजन के बाद वे 15 मार्च को फिजी लौट जाएंगे। फिजी में भारतीय मूल के लोगों की दशा के बावत सवाल हुआ तो उनके मुंह से पीड़ा भी मुखर हुई। कहा, डेढ़ सौ साल पहले फिजी गए पूर्वजों ने वहां कड़ी मेहनत की, कुछ वापस लौटते पर ज्यादातर वही बस गए, जो बसे उन्होंने व्यापार और विज्ञान के

समाजवादी ब्राह्मणसभा ने किया स्वागत

फैजाबाद : फिजी दंपति का यहां पहुंचने पर सर्किट हाउस में समाजवादी ब्राह्मण सभा ने राष्ट्रीय महासचिव आशीष पांडेय 'दीपू' के अगुवाई में रामनामी ओझाकर स्वागत किया गया। स्वागत करने वालों में भूपेंद्र पांडेय, गौरवमणि तिवारी, पवन तिवारी, रमेश पांडेय, सुनील उपाध्याय, अतनीश पांडेय आदि शामिल रहे। इसके साथ ही कनक भवन सरकार का चित्र व वाल्मीकि रामायण स्मृति कर भेंट किया गया। उन्होंने अयोध्या जाकर नागेश्वरनाथ, कनक भवन, हनुमानगढ़ी, जैन मंदिर आदि का दर्शन पूजन किया। इसके बाद हलकास पुरवा स्थित अपने पैतृक गांव भी गए।



फिजी निवासी जगदीश प्रसाद को स्मृति चिह्न देते सपा ब्राह्मण सभा के राष्ट्रीय महासचिव आशीष पांडेय

क्षेत्र में तरक्की के झंडे गाड़े। वे बताते हैं कि वहां 25 साल पहले भारतीयों की आबादी 52 फीसदी हो गई थी और हमने अपनी सरकार भी बना ली थी, लेकिन सैन्य विद्रोह के बाद काफी लोग अमेरिका, कनाडा, आस्ट्रेलिया, न्यूजीलैंड जैसे देशों में विस्थापित हुए हैं नतीजतन आवादी घटकर अब 38 फीसद रह गई है। परंपराओं की बाबत बताया कि शादी-व्याह की परंपरा तिलक चढ़ाने से लेकर जयमाल व विदाई तक की पूर्ववत् ही चल रही है। मृतक संस्कार भी 13 दिन में पिंडदान के साथ समाप्त होता है। हां! इतना जरूर है कि नई पीढ़ी पहनावे के स्तर पर बदल रही है। नहीं तो महिलाएं परंपरागत ढंग से साड़ी व सलवार भी पहनती हैं। वे बताते हैं ब्राह्मणों व पुरोहितों के क्लब हैं। मंदिर भी बहुतायत हैं। सियासत पर भी टिप्पणी करने से वे खुद को नहीं रोक पाते। कहते हैं कि पं. नेहरू व इंदिरा गांधी जैसे नेता भारत में नहीं रहे। केंद्र में गठबंधन की सरकारों ने अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर भारत की शक्ति को कमजोर किया है।

On a recent tour of India, he and his wife were welcomed by representatives of the government of India in the Rashtra Pati Bhavan in Faizabad.



SHRIMATI PREM LATA MAHARAJ

Ek Jhalak Prem Maharaj Ki

Prem is a Sanskrit word for "love." More specifically, it refers to pure, unconditional love that leads to total devotion and surrender. Of the various paths of yoga, Bhakti yoga is most associated with prem, as the highest form of devotion (*bhakti*) is prem.

Hinduism has several words that translate as love, but each describes a different type of love. Kama, for example, is pleasurable love, but prem (also called prema) is an elevated form of love in which the devotee loves without selfishness and with no expectations of something in return for that prem love.

Mrs Prem Maharaj is a very active member of the Hindu Heritage Society and has been there since its inception. She has seen the society and its members (and their children) grow in the last 25 years. She has been instrumental in its inception and its growth including the Society's many milestones in Australia. Mrs Maharaj is very involved in the current 25th anniversary celebrations of the Hindu Heritage Society.

Hindu Heritage Society ka Hardik aabhar hai Mrs Maharaj Ke samarpan (dedication) aur Sewa (service) ko.

Mrs Prem Maharaj was born in Fiji. The granddaughter of 2 prominent businessmen, she grew up with a very business savvy mind. Mrs Maharaj migrated to Australia with her husband and family in 1992.

As her great grandparents had initially arrived from India, this makes Mrs Maharaj a 4th Generation Fiji born Indian. She has held on to her Indian and Hindu heritage staunchly. Her command of the Hindi language, her knowledge of Hindu Religion and Scriptures are immaculate.

Both Panditji and Mrs Maharaj are devout Hindus and well known in the Indian and Hindu circles of Sydney. As a child, Mrs Maharaj had an active interest in Indian heritage and culture. As a High School Student, she was one of the Indian Cultural Dancers at the Fiji Independence Day celebrations in 1970 in the presence of HRH Prince Charles, (now King Charles III).

Later she was also selected to represent Fiji at the “World Expo 88” held in Townsville, Queensland Australia. This was indeed an honour to represent the Fiji Indian Community on the World stage.



Mrs Prem Maharaj on tour playing Sitar with her Indian cultural troupe.

During her time in Fiji, Mrs Maharaj had sent both her daughters to learn the “kalaa” of Bharatanatyam Dancing from the wife of the then Indian High Commissioner to Fiji, Mrs Lekha Shrinivasan. Both Sangeeta and Swaran had followed their mother’s footsteps and performed many times on stage in Fiji and were also featured as Indian classical dances in the annual calendar issued by Fintel Fiji Ltd in 1992.

Mrs Maharaj, was also a keen volunteer for the Poor Relief Society in Fiji for many years. The Society helped provide food and other items to poor families in Fiji. Mrs Maharaj was an active fund raiser for the Charity and helped organise many functions for fund raising activities on behalf of the Charity. This is a trait she has utilised in successfully organising many functions for the HHS in Sydney during their 25 years of existence.

Mrs Maharaj has brought up her children and grandchildren with strict Hindu values. Recently organised the Janeo Sanskaar for their grandchildren Saurav and Siddharth Maharaj.

Most recently the Maharaj Family had a week-long Shrimad Bhagwat Saptah Parayan at their premises in August 2022. To date in Australia, she is supporting her husband, Pandit Jagdish Maharaj in his journey as a Hindu Priest in Sydney.

Her children Sangeeta, Swaran, Aanant and Anmol are volunteers with the Hindu Heritage Society and Aanant is the Secretary of the Hindu Heritage Society at the current moment, taking over from his Father.



**GOLDEN JUBILEE
CELEBRATION**

**ON BEHALF OF EN-
TIRE HHS FAMILY,
WE WISH YOU A VERY
HAPPY 50TH WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY**

**PANDIT JAGDISH JI
AND
PREM LATA JI.**

CONGRATULATIONS



Mrs Prem Maharaj with her entire family, 4 children their respective spouses and 9 grandchildren



Born in 1977, at a remote part of Uttarakhand and border of western Nepal, Harish Bhatt had a deep interest in Sanatan Dharma lifestyle. By nature, he used to get immense pleasure in helping others in need, was obedient but at the same time had curiosity about nature and the creation. People knew this child would be a famous yogi in the future as he also had a deep interest in Meditation and Yoga.

HG Harisharan Maharaj

After completing his primary education, he studied Sanskrit language and scriptures including Srimad Bhagwatam and Geeta under guidance of his elder brother Pandit Narayan Bhatt (Shastri) and gained a deep understanding of Vedik Bangmay, the Scriptures and Sanatan Dharma in general.

He spent some time in Vrindavan to gain some more spiritual upliftment.

He has an educational background as below.

Bachelor in Arts (B.A.) from Jodhpur National University, Jodhpur.

Intermediate Grade in Drawing from Chitrachaman College of Art, Dehradun

Diploma in Computer Software from Mumbai

Primary education in Haridwar.

He was invited to Sydney Australia by Indo-Australia Art Educational Centre (Kalaa Mandir) in 1999. After spending about a year teaching art at Indo-Australia Educational Centre, Mr Bhatt along with the management committee decided to change the name of this Centre as "Hindu Heritage Society Inc"

He worked tirelessly to introduce Sanatan Sanskriti in Australia and was affiliated with many organisations such as Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha, Australian Hindi Indian Association (AHIA)

He was principal organiser of many events and taught Yoga and Drawing and Painting to many people. He has organised many seminars and exhibitions to promote Hindu Heritage in Australia.

After returning from Australia, HG Harisharan Maharaj entered into family life, but continued to contribute for the benefit and unity of his motherland Nepal.

Pt Harish Bhatt received "Vaishana Diksha " from HDG Mohansharan Devacharya Maharaj of Nepal and his name was changed to HG Harisharan Maharaj.

On instructions from his Guru, HG Harisharan Maharaj established a charity organization "Lok Kalyankari Sewa Trust" in Nepal with the aim of transforming the local and global society into a harmonious and peaceful society by eradicating the unsocial ele-

He worked hard to provide shelter to the cows who were left abandoned on the streets and is still working with the general public, various organisations and the governmental bodies to establish a holistic "Cow Shelter". The honesty and discipline are still engraved in his heart and due to this very nature, he has gained widespread support among general public as well as from Pandits, Saints and Scholars to promote the Sanatan Dharma globally and hence the **Hindu Mahasangh** has nominated him for the post of "Vishwa Hindu Prabhari".

Hindu Heritage Society Australia extends its well wishes for his mission and brighter future.



The cow represents Mother Earth, as it is a source of goodness and its milk nourishes all creatures. Krishna, a central Hindu deity, is often portrayed in stories recounting his life as a cowherd and referring to him as the child who protects cows.

As the cow is a sacred animal for Hindus, all products derived from it are highly valued. There are a number of ways to use milk. It is, for example, transformed into yoghurt, which, savoury or flavoured, is incorporated into meals. Yoghurt is also the base for the sauce for chopped vegetables and spices and is also consumed as a drink, mixed with water or iced milk. Ghee, a type of clarified butter, is highly popular. Also buttermilk, a by-product of butter, forms a major part of the rural diet.

The cow's goodness is not, however, restricted to its milk. Cow urine is sometimes included in a purifying mixture used in some religious rituals. Cow dung is used as a fertilizer and fuel. Collected, shaped and dried, it is used for cooking food.



SHRIMATI VIMLA RAO

*Trainer and Practitioner of: Spiritual Hypnotherapy
Clinical Hypnotherapy Bowen Therapy*

*Senior Associate Member of ASCH
Senior Executive Member of IICT*

Mobile: 0415483459

Email: therapist@ambienthealth.com.au

Shishya of Swami Satya Nand Saraswati – Shree Ram Sharnam

Vimla Rao is a very friendly and enthusiastic spiritual therapist and instructor, practicing various modalities in order to give a vibrant life-style to all those who seek help.

Vimla was born and brought up in Fiji but, in 1985, chose to make Australia her home. She had been employed at various universities as a physics technical officer until 2003 when her thirst for working in the healthcare industry led her to the role of Home Care worker during which time she built an amazing rapport with her elderly, sick and disabled clients. Her passion led her to the Bowen Therapy world when, in 2005, she completed her Diploma of Bowen Therapy and started on her new journey of helping clients through their various physical and emotional ailments. She pursued this career further and, by 2010, became an international instructor of Bowen Therapy, teaching in Australia, Fiji, India and Pakistan.

While on the path of healing, Vimla realized that there was a subtle aspect beyond the physical and the emotional. Her search led her to Dr Yogesh Choudhary, the founder and Director of the Indian Institute of Hypnotherapy, where she mastered Clinical as well as Spiritual Hypnotherapy. Under Dr Yogesh Choudhary's Guidance, Vimla learned about talking to the organs and systems of the Body as well as treating clients with issues due to the presence of spirit in their vicinity.

Along with her spiritual knowledge that she has been blessed by a Guru and gained through her study of scriptures, she now runs a very successful clinic and is able to bring all her knowledge gained over the years into her work as an instructor for AusHealth College of Vibrant Therapies.

Vimla's message to mankind is:

"Help yourself live a vibrant life to keep yourself and all those who seek help, happy with total fulfillment, contentment and inner peace".

Current Office Bearers of the Hindu Heritage Society

Trustees

Pt Narayan Bhatt, (Shastri)

Is a Registered Marriage Celebrant, (Civil & Religious), Vice President: Australian Council of Hindu Clergy Inc. and is a member: Brahman Purohit MahaSabha Inc

Pt Bhatt has been trained as priest since his teens. Pdt Narayan Bhatt has served the Hindu community of Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra since his arrival in Australia. He speaks fluent Hindi, English, Nepali, Gujarati and Sanskrit languages. Pundit Narayan Bhatt is a well-respected figure in the Hindu community of Sydney, Australia, and his contributions to promoting Hinduism and its values have been commendable.

In addition to founding and serving as the President of the Hindu Heritage Society Inc. (HHS), Pundit Bhatt has many associations with other well-known Hindu institutions of Sydney, such as the Hindu Council of Australia (HCA).



Pt. Jagdish P. Maharaj

Pt. Maharaj is a Justice of the Peace Authorised NSW Marriage Celebrant, V.P.- Sanatan Dharma Brahman

Purohit Maha Sabha, Sydney, Australia.

Pandit Jagdish Maharaj, a highly esteemed figure, has been acknowledged for his remarkable contributions to the Hindu community. Through his dedicated efforts, he has played a significant role in promoting and uplifting the Hindu faith, both within Australia and beyond.

Punditji has received awards from the Hindu Council of Australia and BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha and other various organisations.

Trustees Continued



Mrs Malti Maharaj is married to Pt Shailenda Maharaj and is a proud mother of sons Kavish and Akshay , mother in law to Saras and Vikantha and grandmother to Aryan. The eldest daughter of late Mr & Mrs Janmai Jai Prasad, Malti is the third generation of her paternal line, born outside India. Malti has been member of Hindu Heritage Society since 2006. Malti is currently one of the three Trustees of the Hindu Heritage Society.

Malti was born in Fiji and studied in New Zealand, Fiji and Australia. She holds a Bachelors Degree in Accounting and Finance and is a Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA). Malti has been a CPA for over 30 years. Malti has worked as an Accountant for large corporations and the Australian Government. For the twelve years prior to her retirement Malti held teaching positions at both Macquarie University and the Western Sydney University.

Malti is passionate about promoting Hindu Tradition & Culture and has immense interest passing on the Hindu philosophy to the younger generations in Australia.

She strongly believes that the role played by Hindu Heritage Society will help promote the growth of Hindu cultural traditions in Australia. Malti strongly believes in the principal of giving back to one's society and puts this into practice as every opportunity.

Malti volunteers her time to the HHS, the New South Wales Cancer Council and Arthritis NSW. In February 2023, Malti's contribution to Arthritis NSW was acknowledged by Her Excellency the Honorable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales at a ceremony at Government House in Sydney.

Malti is grateful to Pundit Narayan Bhatt for his ongoing guidance and support. She would like to acknowledge and thank him and the HHS's Hindu Priests for their tireless efforts in the promotion of Hindu traditions & values in New South Wales and Australia.

The Current office Bearers of Hindu Heritage Society



Mr Sachin Shandil is a son of Pt Sukhendra Shandil and Mrs Padma Shandil, was born in Suva, Fiji and has lived in Sydney Australia since migrating with his parents and elder sister in the year 2000.

Sachin is the 4th generation of Late Pt Muni Prasad Shandil and Late Mrs Basuda Shandil. Sachin's grandfather and paternal uncles (dada's) were very well recognised and prominent purohits of Fiji especially served their community in Labasa and wider Fiji.

Sachin Shandil, President (2023)

Sachin completed his High School Education at Dudley High School. He has a Bachelor of Information System from University of Western Sydney and Diploma in Business Management. His studies has enabled him to work with few high IT tech organisations here in Sydney and has built a successful career.

Sachin is married to Namrata who also has served HHS with dedication. Their kids Vivaan and Viraat are now becoming engaged with younger generation of the HHS family. As Sachin had exposure since his childhood to attend Bal Vikas, Sachin saw value in sending his kids to Bal Vikas in Sydney which teaches human values, shlokas and religion.

Hindu Heritages Society's light came in the year 2000 whilst accompanying Pt Narayan Bhatt Ji in a tabla during an event. Since then Sachin slowly becoming aware of HHS events and was given an opportunity to perform duties (sewa) towards the society.

The vision was very clear where youth promotion was centre of excellence and the Hindu Heritage Society's vision of promoting Hindu culture was paramount which gave Sachin more focus to be part of HHS. HHS has partnered with few larger organisations which HHS executives collaborated to strengthen the Hindu and the Australian community.

Sachin has been part of below Sansthas's:

Past Vice President of Santana Dharam Pratinidhi of Australia 2011-2012

Past president and current member of Navyuak Satsang Ramayan Mandali

Past assistance secretary Hindu Heritage Society 2020-2022

Sachin has always had keen interest in music. Sachin's spare time is well spent with self-learn music, revising shlokas with his kids and Hindu scriptures to be aligned and take on his Grandfather and father's footsteps.

Thanks to the past and present members and volunteers with their diligent and hard-work has made HHS a successful organisation today.



Anant Maharaj,

Secretary (2023)

I am Anant Maharaj, currently serving as the Secretary of the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS). My journey with HHS began as a volunteer when it was first established, and over the years, I have taken on various roles within the organization. In 2019, I became the treasurer, and in 2023, I was entrusted with the position of Secretary.

My connection to Hinduism and our cultural heritage runs deep. As the eldest son of co-founder Pdt. Jagdish Maharaj and Mrs. Prem Maharaj, I was introduced to the basics of Hinduism through Bal Vikas classes in Suva, Fiji. These Sunday classes, conducted by Dr. and Mrs. Kamath, played a vital role in teaching local children about our rich culture and religion.

Our family roots can be traced back to Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, in India, and my ancestors made their way to Fiji through the Gimit Indenture system under the British government. My great grandfather, Gajadhar Maharaj, worked in Natal, South Africa, and Rangoon, Burma before settling in Fiji, brought there by CSR Sugar, his employer. My grandfather, Parmeshwar Dutt Maharaj, and my father, Pdt. Jagdish Maharaj, were both born in Fiji. I myself was born in Suva in September 1979, and later moved to Sydney, Australia in 1994, where I continued to embrace and practice my religious and cultural heritage through regular visits to temples and participation in pujas.

In 2008, my wife Kaveeta and I had a traditional Hindu wedding ceremony in Fiji, and we have continued to maintain our connection to our faith by regularly attending temples and participating in various pujas. Celebrating major festivals like Diwali with our extended family has always been a significant part of our lives.

In 2021, we had the honor of celebrating the Janeo Sanskar/Yagnopavit ceremony for our son Saurav and my nephew Sidharth. This two-day program, led by Pdt. Narayan Bhatt as the Janeo guru, held great significance for us as it marked a continuation of a family tradition. My younger brother Anmol and I had completed our own Janeo Sanskar in Fiji in 1991 when I was around 11 years old and Anmol was approximately 7 years old. Witnessing our sons undergoing the same ceremony with all the religious rituals filled us with immense pride.

In 2022, our parents organized a Bhagwat Katha at our residence, spanning over the eight days of Krishna Janmashtami. This auspicious event brought together individuals from Sydney, Melbourne, Fiji, and the United States. The presence and positive feedback from our neighbors, who were amazed by the magnitude of the event held in an Australian suburb, added to the joy and success of the Bhagwat Katha.

As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Hindu Heritage Society, I feel a deep sense of pride and joy in being part of this momentous occasion. It is an honor to contribute to the ongoing success of HHS and to continue promoting and preserving our Hindu Heritage for future generations.



Kavish Maharaj
Treasurer (2023)

Mr Kavish Maharaj is a son of Pt Shailendra and Mrs Malti Maharaj. He is the current Treasurer and past Secretary of the Hindu Heritage Society. Kavish was born in Suva, Fiji and has lived in NSW, Australia since migrating with his parents and younger brother in the late 1980's.

Kavish completed his High School Education at St Paul's Catholic College. He has a Bachelor of Commerce & Economics from Macquarie University and a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration from the University of Technology, Sydney. Since completing his undergraduate studies, Kavish has built a successful career in Institutional Banking and is currently a Vice President at State Street Australia Limited.

The elder of 2two sons, Kavish and his younger brother Akshay are third generation descendants of Pt Ram Charitar Maharaj who migrated from India to Fiji in 1913. Both Kavish and Akshay are active members of the HHS.

Growing up in Australia in the 1990's, the Hindu Heritage Society's vision of promoting culture, with a focus on education set it apart from Indian Cultural associations. This was something that appealed to me, my younger brother Akshay and many others of our age group. I remember attending functions that featured oratory in Hindi, dance, and other cultural activities. Much of the credit goes to Pandit Narayan Bhatt and the Hindu Priests that work closely with him.



This structure and community provided by the Hindu Heritage Society would take on greater meaning as I completed my degree, began developing a career and settled down with my wife Saras. Pundit Bhatt ji HHS community was present at mine and Saras's wedding and continues to be a key part of our lives as we look to raise our son Aryan and teach him the importance of cultural identity and tradition that has been carefully preserved by each successive generation of our family.

Current Executive Committee Members

President Mr Sachin Shandil
Secretary Mr Aanant Maharaj
Treasurer Mr Kavish Maharaj

Committee member Mrs Radhiks Bhatt
Committee Member Mr Sunil Mishra
Committee Member Mrs Puspha Kumar
Committee Member Mr Rajiv Singh
Committee Member Mrs Padma Shandil
Committee Member Mrs Kiran Singh
Committee Member Mr Anmol Maharaj
Committee Member Pt Shailendra Maharaj

To assist in management of the HHS the following portfolios were assigned by the Trustees

Education and Publications- Pt Shailendra Maharaj

Government Liaison - Mr Sunil Mishra

Web and It - President and HHS Executive

Art and Social - Mrs Kiran Singh, Mr Rajiv Singh and Mrs Radhiks Bhatt

Cash Management - Mr Satish Sharma

Public Relations - Mr Aanant Maharaj

Assistant to President- Mrs Padma Shandil

Major Sponsors of Guru Purnima Silver Jubilee Celebrations

SHRIMAN PADAM LALA AND FAMILY



Padam Raj Lala is the Managing Director and founder of Lotus Garments Ltd. Mr. Lala has served as the Chairman of R. B. Patel Group of Companies (Fiji), Merchant Finance, Hume Industries, Standard Concrete Industries and Land Transport Authority, He was the Deputy Mayor of Suva City Council and Deputy Chairman of the Fiji Development Bank. Mr. Lala served as a Board member of the Fiji Trade & Investment Board and was the Chairman of the Textile Clothing and Footwear Council of Fiji . He was the President of Fiji Manufacturers Association. And Chairman of Fiji TV and the President of the Rotary Club of Suva.

Mr. Lala has vast experience in textile manufacturing, retail and wholesale trade. He has been a successful real estate investor and developer. He has been involved various activities with the business community in Fiji and is recognised for his political, cultural, educational and community involvement.

Mr and Mrs Lala are practicing Hindus and from its inception have been regular sponsors of the Hindu Heritage Society. Mr and Mrs Padam Lala together with their family had sponsored the 108 Kund Havan Yagna hosted by the Hindu Heritage Society in 2008. On this occasion they donated 50 sets of Havan Kunds. The Hindu Heritage Society, regularly use these havan kunds in their Prayer functions and Havan Yagnas. Their son, Rajeshwar Lala is also a devout Hindu and over the past 25 years has been a major financial donor of the Hindu Heritage Society.

Mr Padam Lala comes from the extremely well-known family in Fiji. He was born in Nausori Fiji in 1942 and is married to Mrs Gaitri Devi Lala. They are the proud parents of 3 sons who are all married and well settled in their lives.

Padam Lala joined the family business in 1960's and developed Lala's Store into a major and well-known men's boutique shop. In the late 1970's, he established a garment manufacturing plant – Lotus Garments Limited, which is still in operation today and employing approximately 300 people and is regarded as the quality manufacturer of mens and ladies clothing and corporate uniforms. In the late 1990's, Mr. Padam Lala established SUN Insurance Company Limited which is successfully operating and rendering General Insurance to the public of Fiji.

Mr. Lala has been a prominent as a real estate developer in Suva and has developed a number of residential and commercial properties.

The Lala Family has been instrumental in educational, cultural and religious activities in Fiji and has been instrumental in the establishment of Krishna Vedic School in Kuku Nausori, Arya Boys School and DAV College for Boys and Girls.



Dharm~Eva Hato Hanti, Dharmo Rakshati Rakshitah!
Tasma~Dharmo Na Hantvyo, Ma No Dharmo Hato~Vadhit!!

"That which destroys Dharma is destroyed by Dharma. Dharma protects that which protects Dharma: Dharma protects if it is protected". **Manusmriti 8/15.**



Sunil Mishra Profile

Immediate past President 2019-2023

Justice of the Peace (NSW)

BA (Economic & Management)

President – Australian Hindu Educational & Cultural Society 2006 - 2017

Secretary -Australian Hindu Educational & Cultural Society 1998 - 2006

Sunil Mishra is a highly respected community leader and is well known in the Fiji Indian community. He is a known philanthropist at heart and has supported many sporting clubs and charity organisations through sponsorships and donations.

He has been an active member of various religious and cultural groups and has been active in promoting (Sanatan Dharma) religious and cultural values since arriving in Australia in 1990.

Sunil comes from Fiji islands where his forefathers were brought in by the Colonial powers to cultivate Sugar plantations.

Mr Sunil Mishra is a self-made man who comes from humble beginning, hailing from the beautiful Island Nation of Fiji with Indian descent. His great great grandfather was from Sarwan Pur village in the town of Basti in Uttra Pardesh, India.

Mr Mishra migrated to Sydney with his wife and two beautiful daughters in 1990. As a graduate from the University of the South Pacific with experience in the financial sector, Sunil pursued his career in the industry to establish his own finance broking business, Mortgage Hotline NSW.

As a mortgage broker and Director of Mortgage Hotline NSW, Mr Sunil Mishra, continues to serve the public of Sydney and the surrounding regions for over 30 years with assistance in personal and mortgage financing via banking and non banking channels.

Mr Sunil Mishra is also highly respected and widely known on the community front, serving the community as a current Justice of the Peace and being an active member in executive roles of various community-based associations, Sunil is the immediate past president of Hindu Heritage Society of Australia and currently holds the position of Vice President.

Apart from being a successful businessman and a leader in the community,

Mr Mishra is also a proud grandfather of three beautiful little munchkins, Diya, Riyaan and Ariana.

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Ramendra Kumar was born in Ba, Fiji Islands to Babu Kuar Narayan and Sumittra .

Fiji a country and archipelago in the South Pacific Ocean. The Indian diaspora made Fiji its home since 1879 when the Indians were brought by the British to work on sugar cane, cotton and banana plantations.

Remendra's father came from India at the age of 3 with his paternal grandfather. His maternal grandfather came from Jamaica to Fiji to work in the sugar cane plantation.

Growing up in Vatulaulau, Ba Ramend attended Vatulaulau Sanatan School and later completed his secondary education at Xavier College. He began his career at Westpac Banking Corporation .He continued with his studies by completing a degree from the University of the South Pacific and continued working at the Westpac Banking Corporation as an accountant in the finance and planning department. He is married to Pushpa ,also from Xavier College. Pushpa also worked for Westpac Bank in Suva.

In 1995 Ramendra migrated to Sydney Australia, with his wife and two sons Raj and Romi. He continued his studies and became a Chartered Professional Accountant and is also Justice of the Peace in NSW . Currently he is self-employed and runs his own tax agency. Ramend is a religious person and regularly takes part in religious and cultural activities in Sydney .

He has keen interest in religion and music (bhajans and old classics), Ramend continues to work and loves to spends time with his two grandsons Kush and Dhruv. He is a supporter of HHS and together with his family is very thankful to Pandit Narayan Bhatt ji for his support and introducing his family to Hindu Heritage Society. As the Society celebrates its 25th anniversary, he wishes the society and its members all the best in future.





Pooja and Niten Singh

" My name is Niten Singh, son of late Dal Bahadur Singh. I was born in 1980, and grew up in Raralevu, Nausori, Fiji. I joined Raralevu Sanatan Navyuwak Ramayan Mandali at a very young age, and developed a keen interest in our religious scriptures and in Holi (Faag) singing. I genuinely enjoy studying our scriptures like The Gita, and helping spread the knowledge.

I married Pooja Sen in 2011, and we have one daughter Ambar Singh. Pooja also has a keen interest in the Hindu way of life, and supports me in every step. We take a keen interest in volunteering at the events organised by HHS. Personally we are very grateful that an organisation like HHS exists in Sydney because we as a family benefit a lot from HHS activities".



SPONSORS & CONTRIBUTORS



HARDIK THAKKAR

MANAGING DIRECTOR
ICONIC TILES AND BATHWARE
120-122 Warren Road Smithfield NSW

Mr. Hardik Thakkar is a successful businessman and the owner of Iconic Tiles and Bathware, a reputable company that specializes in importing and distributing high-quality tiles, timber flooring and bathroom fixtures in the Western Sydney area.

Iconic Tiles & Bathware

Born and raised in Gujarat, India, Mr. Thakkar arrived in Sydney in 2009 as an international student, with a dream to pursue a career in business. Despite facing numerous challenges, he remained focused on his goal and worked hard to gain the necessary skills and experience. He started his career in the industry by working at a tile and bathroom fixtures store, where he gained extensive knowledge and experience in the field.

In 2017, Mr. Thakkar achieved a significant milestone when he became a 50% partner in a multi-million-dollar company. His dedication and hard work had paid off, and he was finally making his mark in the business world. However, Mr. Thakkar didn't stop there. He continued to work tirelessly to grow the company and expand its reach. By 2021, Mr. Thakkar had achieved another milestone - he bought the company out and rebranded it to Iconic Tiles & Bathware, that is one of the biggest showrooms in Western Sydney that is spread over 3000m² of warehousing space. This was a momentous achievement for Mr. Thakkar, who had come a long way since his days as an international student.

Under Mr. Thakkar's leadership, Iconic Tiles and Bathware has become a well-known name in the industry, thanks to its excellent customer service, quality products, and competitive prices. The company offers a wide range of products, including tiles, bathroom fixtures, natural stone, timber flooring and more, catering to the needs and preferences of a diverse range of customers.

Mr. Thakkar is a hands-on owner who takes an active role in the operations of his business. He believes in building strong relationships with his customers and providing them with personalized service to ensure their satisfaction.

Today, Iconic Tiles is a thriving business that has cemented its place as a leader in the tiles and Bathware industry. He is a very well known in the Indian business community of Sydney. In addition to his work at Iconic Tiles and Bathware Smithfield, Mr. Thakkar is also actively involved in various charitable activities, such as supplying tiles and bathroom products to temples, churches and gurudwaras. He believes in giving back to the community and supports several organizations that work towards social causes.

He treats his staff at iconic tiles as family members. Mr. Thakkar values the people who work with him, and he has established a workplace culture that is built on mutual respect, trust, and care. He believes that when a company operates like a family, it can create a more engaged workforce, leading to increased productivity and ultimately a successful endeavor.



In conclusion, Hardik Thakkar's story is a testament to the power of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. His journey from an international student to the owner of a multi-million-dollar company is truly remarkable, and he serves as an inspiration to us all.

FOOD DONATION BY SHARMA FAMILY

A very dedicated family , Mr Kuar Pal Sharma and Mrs Anjala Indrani Sharma very kindly donated food for all at the Guru Purnima 2023 celebrations.

Their association with HHS is very valuable from last 25 years.



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Mr Jainesh Jogia - Directory of Agnee Funerals

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Satish and Lalita Singh

Mr Satish and Mrs Lalita Singh are very active members of the Hindu Heritage Society.

Mr Satish Singh, formerly of Suva Fiji is the son of Late Mr Amar Singh who was the Head Teacher of the Nehru Memorial Primary School in Fiji.

Mrs Lalita Singh,(Nee Shandil) is the daughter of the late Mr and Mrs Shyam Sundar Shandil.

Late Mr Shandil was an Officer in the Fiji Police force and a very well known and respected Brahman Pundit upon his retirement. Being the daughter of a well respected Pundit and being brought up in a Brahman household, made Mrs Lalita Singh a very devout Hindu.

Mrs Singh has served as the Treasurer of the Hindu Heritage Society in the past.

You will always find the couple very actively participating at all Hindu Heritage Society Functions and religious events in Sydney.

श्री भगवद् गीता जयंती

गीता जयंती हिंदुओं के लिए एक बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण दिन है। इस दिन हिंदुओं के पवित्र ग्रंथ भगवद् गीता का जन्म हुआ था, अर्थात् गीता जयंती वह दिन है जब भगवान श्री कृष्ण ने अर्जुन को गीता सुनाई थी।

Shri Bhagvad Gita Jayanti

Gita Jayanti is a very important day for Hindus. On this day, the holy book of Hindus, Bhagavad Gita was born, ie Gita Jayanti is the day when Lord Shri Krishna told the Gita to Arjuna.

The Divine India

**GITA SUGITA KARTAVYA, KIM ANYAIH SASTRA-VISTARAIH
YA SVAYAM PADMA-NABHASYA, MUKHA-PADMAD VINIHSRTA**

The Gita should always be sung with devotion. This divine song emanated from the holy lotus mouth of the Supreme Lord Himself, Lord Sri Krishna. What more can any other scriptures give?

ASHWIN AND NAMITA GOVIND



Mr. Ashwin Govind and Mrs. Namita Govind are a highly respected couple who have made a successful life for themselves in Sydney, Australia, after migrating from Auckland, New Zealand. They are well-known for their philanthropic work and their active involvement in the Hindu Heritage Society.

Mrs. Namita Govind is originally from the famous Dharam Jeet Singh & Son Family of Raralevu Nausori in the Fiji Islands. She is highly regarded for her strong sense of community and dedication to promoting cultural heritage. As a member of the Hindu Heritage Society, she has been actively involved in organizing cultural events and

promoting the rich cultural heritage of India.

Mr. Ashwin Govind is an accomplished businessperson who has worked in the IT industry for several years. He has a reputation for being highly professional and has built a successful career for himself in Sydney. He is well-respected in the community for his entrepreneurial skills and his commitment to supporting local businesses.

Together, Mr. and Mrs. Govind are highly involved in philanthropic activities, supporting various charities and community organizations in Sydney. They are passionate about giving back to the community and have been actively involved in supporting the Guru Purnima Program in 2023 as sponsors.

Their commitment to promoting cultural heritage and giving back to the community has earned them widespread respect and admiration in Sydney. Their dedication to supporting various charitable causes is a testament to their strong sense of community and their belief in making a positive impact on the world around them.

FOUR MAJOR ANNUAL EVENTS - FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME

Saraswati Pooja

Saraswati Pooja is dedicated to the Goddess Saraswati, the embodiment of knowledge, wisdom, and the arts. The Hindu Heritage Society organises this pooja to invoke the blessings of Goddess Saraswati for learning, education, and creative pursuits. Students, artists, and scholars gather to worship the Goddess and seek her divine guidance. This pooja is especially significant for students, who seek the blessings of the Goddess to excel in their studies.

Holi Celebration

Holi, also known as the Festival of Colours, is a vibrant and joyous celebration that marks the arrival of spring. The Hindu Heritage Society organises Holi festivities, where people come together to play with coloured powders, sing and dance, and exchange greetings.

Guru Purnima

Guru Purnima is a sacred day dedicated to expressing gratitude and reverence towards spiritual teachers and gurus. The Hindu Heritage Society conducts a Guru Purnima pooja to honour the lineage of enlightened masters who have imparted spiritual wisdom. This pooja is a reminder of the importance of spiritual guidance and the role of gurus in illuminating the path of enlightenment. It is a time for introspection, reflection, and deepening one's spiritual connection with the divine.

Durga Pooja

Durga Pooja is a major Hindu festival that celebrates the triumph of Goddess Durga over the forces of evil. The Hindu Heritage Society organises elaborate Durga Pooja rituals during Navratri, a nine-night celebration dedicated to the divine feminine energy. Devotees worship Goddess Durga, who represents strength, courage, and protection. This pooja invokes the blessings of Goddess Durga and seeks her divine grace for the removal of obstacles and the attainment of spiritual and worldly prosperity.



Saraswati pooja for youth

by Radhika Bhatt

It is interesting to learn about the spiritual significance attached to the worship of Goddess Saraswati and how men of principle prioritize spiritual enlightenment over the pursuit of wealth and power. The symbolism behind the vehicle assigned to each of the three goddesses is also noteworthy, with the white swan of Saraswati representing purity and discrimination.

The celebration of Vasant Panchami, which heralds the arrival of springtime and new life, is an occasion of great religious, seasonal, and social significance for Hindus all over the world. It is heartening to know that HHS has been initiating Maha Saraswati Pooja on this occasion since its inception, and that it has been held in different public places to encourage youth participation.

It is also commendable that HHS has been teaching the first letter to new kids before they start school, emphasizing the importance of education and the role of Goddess Saraswati in acquiring knowledge and wisdom.

Initiatives like these are crucial in preserving our cultural heritage and ensuring that future generations continue to appreciate and value our diverse traditions. It is heartening to see HHS taking the lead in promoting the worship of Goddess Saraswati and imparting knowledge and wisdom to the younger generation.

Vasant Panchami is a festival full of religious, seasonal and social significance and is celebrated by Hindus all over the world with verve and a new sense of optimism. Magh Sukla Panchami (5th day of the bright fortnight of the lunar month of Magh) is the day of Vasant Panchami. Hindus all over the world celebrate this festival with great enthusiasm. This Panchami is also known as special Saraswati worship Day. It is believed that this day is Goddess Saraswati's incarnation day. Hindu Heritage Society is the first organisation who has publicly introduced this prayer in Australian soil.

Yellow colour is given special importance on this day. On Vasant Panchami, Saraswati is dressed in yellow garments and worshipped (with Puja, Havan etc.).

Men of principle (men who can discriminate) worship goddess Saraswati for spiritual enlightenment. In their opinion, there can be no comparison between the king and the learned (spiritually advanced). The king is honoured within his kingdom, whereas the learned is respected (or worshipped) everywhere. Sainly people and people inclined towards spiritual progress attach great importance to the worship of goddess Saraswati.

The vehicle assigned to each of the three goddesses also symbolically represent their special powers. The white swan of Saraswati symbolises Sattva Guna (purity and discrimination). The owl of Lakshmi and the lion or tiger of Durga symbolise the other two gunas (Rajas and Tamas).

The first faint signals of the forthcoming festival of Holi manifest at Vasant Panchami. Seasons undergo change. The coming of springtime is heralded. Trees are displaying new shoots. New life is evident in the woods and fields. Nature decorates Mango trees with new blossoms. Wheat and other crops enliven with evidence of new life.

Vasant Panchami is a festival full of religious, seasonal and social significance and is celebrated by Hindus all over the world with verve and a new sense of optimism.

HHS has held the Maha Saraswati Pooja, since its inception. Every year, on the occasion of Vasanth Panchami, which comes between January and February, the event is held in different public places, where youth are encouraged to take part, by worshipping Mata Saraswati.

Goddess Saraswati

The Goddess Saraswati is worshipped as the Goddess of Learning and the fountain of fine arts and science, and also the symbol of supreme vedantic knowledge. It is also believed that goddess Saraswati endows human beings with the powers of speech and wisdom.

Sanskrit Sloka

या कुन्देन्दु तुषारहारधवला, या शुभवस्त्रावृता, या वीणावरदण्डमण्डितकरा, या श्वेतपद्मासना
या ब्रह्माच्युतशंकरप्रभृतिभि, देवैः सदा पूजिता, सामां पातु सरस्वती भगवती निःशेषजाड्यापहा.

YAA KUNDENDU TUSHAARA HAARADHAVALAA, YAA SHUBHRAVASTRAAVRITHA|

YAA VEENAVARA DANDAMANDITAKARA, YAA SHWETHA PADMAASANA||

YAA BRAHMAACHYUTHA SHANKARA PRABHRITIBHIR DEVAISADAA VANDITHA|

SAA MAAM PAATU SARASWATEE BHAGAVATEE NIHSHESHA JAADYAAPAHAA||

Translation

"May Goddess Saraswati, who is fair like the jasmine-colored moon, and whose pure white garland is like frosty dew drops; who is adorned in radiant white attire, on whose beautiful arm rests the *veena*, and whose throne is a white lotus; who is surrounded and respected by the Gods, protect me. May you fully remove my lethargy, sluggishness, and ignorance."

The Sanskrit word sara means "essence" and swa means "self." Thus, Saraswati means "the essence of the self." Saraswati is represented in Hindu mythology as the divine consort of Lord Brahma, the Creator of the universe. Since knowledge is necessary for creation, Saraswati symbolizes the creative power of Brahma.

Goddess Saraswati is worshipped by all persons interested in knowledge, especially students, teachers, scholars, and scientists.

In Her popular images and pictures, Goddess Saraswati is generally depicted with four arms (some pictures may show only two arms), wearing a white sari and seated on a white lotus. She holds a book and a rosary in Her rear two hands, while the front two hands are engaged in the playing of a lute (veena). Her right leg is shown slightly pushing against Her left leg. She uses a swan as Her vehicle. There is a peacock by Her side gazing at Her. This symbolism illustrates the following spiritual ideas:

* **The lotus** is a symbol of the Supreme Reality, and a white lotus also denotes supreme knowledge. By sitting on a lotus, Saraswati signifies that She is Herself rooted in the Supreme Reality, and symbolizes supreme knowledge. The white colour symbolizes purity and knowledge. The white sari that the Goddess is wearing denotes that She is the embodiment of pure knowledge.

* **The four arms** denote Her omnipresence and omnipotence. The two front arms indicate Her activity in the physical world and the two back arms signify Her presence in the spiritual world. The four hands represent the four elements of the inner personality. The mind (manas) is represented by the front right hand, the intellect (buddhi) by the front left hand, the conditioned consciousness (chitta) by the rear left hand, and the ego (ahankara) by the rear right hand.

* **The left side of the body** symbolizes the qualities of the heart and the right side symbolizes activities of the mind and intellect.

* **A book in the rear left hand** signifies that knowledge acquired must be used with love and kindness to promote prosperity of mankind.

* **The rosary** signifies concentration, meditation, and contemplation, leading to samadhi, or union with God.

* **A rosary in the rear right hand** representing ego conveys that true knowledge acquired with love and devotion melts the ego and results in liberation (moksha) of the seeker from the bondage to the physical world.

* The Goddess is shown **playing a musical instrument** that is held in her front hands, which denote mind and intellect. This symbol conveys that the seeker must tune his mind and intellect in order to live in perfect harmony with the world. Such harmonious living enables the individual to utilize acquired knowledge for the welfare of all mankind.

* **Two swans** are depicted on the left side of the Goddess. A swan is said to have a sensitive beak that enables it to distinguish pure milk from a mixture of milk and water. A swan, therefore, symbolizes the power of discrimination, or the ability to discriminate between right and wrong or good and bad. Saraswati uses the swan as Her carrier. This indicates that one must acquire and apply knowledge with discrimination for the good of mankind. Knowledge that is dominated by ego can destroy the world.

* **A peacock** is sitting next to Saraswati and is anxiously waiting to serve as Her vehicle. A peacock depicts unpredictable behaviour as its moods can be influenced by the changes in the weather. Saraswati is using a swan as a vehicle and not the peacock. This signifies that one should overcome fear, indecision, and fickleness in order to acquire true knowledge.

सरस्वती नमस्तुभ्यं, वरदे कामरूपिणी । विद्यारम्भं करिष्यामि सिद्धिर्भवतु मे सदा ॥

Oh! Goddess Saraswati, my humble prostrations unto Thee, who is the fulfiller of all wishes. I start my studies with Thy worship and always pray for success.

Hindu Heritage Society Promoting Hindi Oratory as part of Saraswati Pooja

Pt Sukhendra Shandil

In Australia, where English is the official language, the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) recognizes the importance of preserving the Hindi language and cultural heritage.

To address the concern of losing the mother tongue, HHS has taken initiatives to encourage children to learn Hindi. Several Hindi language schools have been established in Sydney under the HHS's guidance.

While HHS acknowledges the presence of Hindi schools, it also identifies a gap in the education system. Learning is confined to the classroom, lacking a platform for students to practice and express themselves effectively in Hindi. To address this, HHS has introduced the concept of Hindi Oratory in schools. This program brings together participants from various schools, providing students with an opportunity to develop their Hindi speaking skills and express their thoughts confidently.

HHS has developed guidelines for the Hindi Oratory program and has fostered strong relationships with schools. By communicating the importance of enhancing spoken Hindi, HHS collaborates with school principals to prepare students for the annual event.

Effective time management and communication skills are crucial in ensuring the smooth conduct of the oratory competition and maintaining proper documentation.

The Hindi Oratory program caters to three age groups: years one to five, six to eight, and nine to twelve. Each school selects three students per age group to participate. HHS recognizes the efforts of these students by presenting them with certificates and trophies.

The oratory event coincides with the Mata Saraswati puja, allowing students to seek blessings from Goddess Saraswati while showcasing their language skills and the first letter is taught to new kids, before starting their school year. (Akshar Arabmh, Vidya Rambh)

HHS extends its gratitude to parents, teachers, and school committees for their continuous support in promoting Hindi Oratory. Their dedication and coaching play a vital role in preparing students for this annual event.

Other institutions in the Sydney region are also actively contributing to the preservation of Hindu heritage. The Green Valley Languages and Arts School has been serving the local Fiji-Indian community for over 25 years, offering Hindi language, music, and dance classes. In addition to language education, this school instills ethical values, positive morals, and life skills to nurture productive and valued members of society.

The Saturday School of Community Languages, a program by the NSW Department of Education, is the largest provider of face-to-face language education in NSW. Operating across 15 high school sites, this school offers 26 language courses on Saturdays, including Hindi, for students from Year 7 to Year 12.

The Indo-Aust Bal Bharathi Vidyalaya Hindi School, established in June 1987, is the first Hindi-language institution dedicated to teaching Hindi in Sydney. With support from the NSW DTEC Community Languages program, this non-profit school is run entirely by volunteers. Teachers receive an honorarium for their services.

The Australian Hindu Multicultural Association & School of Language Studies operates the Western Sydney Hindi School, which has been serving the community for 29 years. Alongside Hindi language classes, the school offers Bharatanatyam, Bollywood dance, Harmonium, and Tabla instruction. The curriculum incorporates content on Hindu religion and spirituality, and the school introduced meditation classes for parents and grandparents in 2022.

The Australian Institute of Hindi Language Studies, which began in 2003, initially focused on teaching Hindi but later expanded to include Bharat Natyam, Harmonium, and Tabla classes. The school gained popularity, attracting up to 120 pupils. It also published a well-known magazine called "Hamari Pehchaan," which featured student work and messages of support from community members and the State Minister of Education.

Hindi Oratory has become a prominent program in the HHS calendar of events, drawing significant participation from students, parents, siblings, teachers, and friends. This community initiative is dedicated to preserving the language, culture, and art for the future.

The efforts made by the Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) in promoting the Hindi language among students in Sydney are commendable. The initiative of organizing the Hindi Oratory, which allows students to practice and express themselves in Hindi outside the classroom, is a significant step in preserving the mother tongue.

The collaboration with school principals and the preparation of students for the annual event demonstrate the dedication of HHS. The inclusion of three age groups ensures that students of all ages have the opportunity to participate and be recognized.

The distribution of certificates and trophies acknowledges the hard work of students, parents, and teachers. Additionally, holding the Oratory in conjunction with the Mata Saraswati puja adds a cultural and spiritual aspect, allowing students to seek blessings from Goddess Saraswati.

The community expresses gratitude to HHS for promoting the Hindi language and recognizing the support of parents, teachers, and the school committee. Such initiatives are vital in preserving cultural heritage and ensuring the appreciation of diverse linguistic and cultural traditions for future generations.



Some images of Annual Saraswati puja Ceremonies hosted by HHS



Children participating in Vedic Mantra recitals



Musicians at Saraswati Puja



Young and Old alike

Annual Saraswati Puja - Parents with their young Children



Mr Sachin Shandil is a son of
Pt Sukhendra Shandil and
Mrs Padma Shandil.
He is the current President of the Hindu Heritage
Society.

FORMATION OF YOUTH CIRCLES

BY SACHIN SHANDIL

As we said above, youth organizations can be started by two broad groups of people: young people themselves, or an adult who cares about them. Both options make sense, and HHS has taken both options to offer youth inclusion.

My journey with Hindu Heritage Society started in 2000 during my tertiary education days in Sydney. I was made aware of all the events and attended them. Pt N Bhatt gave me an opportunity to play Tabla, sing Bhajans, and included me slowly to be part of the society. The only requirement to myself was "commitment" when required to assist with any events from cleaning to closure of an event site. I made new friends at every event and they were all engaged through Pt N Bhatt's motivation.

We slowly became a small team to perform bhajans, playing musical instruments, sound controls; not only at our hosted events but to the community. The important thing here was guidance from the adults of the HHS community, priests, and from feedback. I have seen like many of HHS members has, how current executives were then little youths are now being put on front of the Hindu community and to run the society with guidance from our senior HHS leaders.

Societies, communities, and organisations should encourage youths involvement and some benefits seen are:

Youth in Hindu societies can help change public awareness of young people from being "the problem" to an important part of making life better in the Hindu and wider community.

Involving young people in the HHS has helped see themselves as part of the whole inclusion of the community and society

By involving young people, the HHS is allowing them to carefully develop their leadership potential within the Hinduism remit, so that as they grow and learn they can become thoughtful, prepared leaders of the Hindu society. Such as e.g. kids are encouraged by their parents to set up events, coordinate events, and showcase other youths to be part of the society; such events give kids opportunity for public speaking, singing, music, drama plays and prayer recitals.

In conclusion young people can bring a remarkable amount of life to an organization; often, their energy, enthusiasm, creativity, and perspective are invaluable to members of larger community initiatives that choose to actively involve them.

Mrs Malti Maharaj

Holi is a very traditional Hindu Festival celebrated in India and many parts of the world including Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, United Kingdom, United States, Nepal, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, South Africa, and other countries where Hindus reside.

Holi is known as the “Festival of Colours”, or the “Festival of Love”. Hindus celebrate Holi as a festival of love and happiness, shedding animosity, greed, hatred and adapting to a new life of love and togetherness.

Holi also signifies the triumph of good over evil as this was the day when evil king Hiranyakashyap was slayed by Narsimha, the half man and half lion the incarnation of Lord Vishnu and saved Prahlad who was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu.

The story of Prahlad and Holika is a significant legend associated with the origins of Holi.

In this legend of Holika and Prahlad, the evil king Hiranyakashyap, demanded that everyone in his kingdom to worship him. To his disappointment his son Prahlad chose not to as he was a devotee of Lord Vishnu. Hiranyakashyap tried several ways to kill his son Prahlad but Lord Vishnu saved him every time.

Finally, he asked his sister, Holika to enter a blazing fire with Prahlad in her lap. Hiranyakashyap knew that Holika had a boon, whereby, she could enter the fire and remain unscathed. Holika coaxed Prahlad to sit in her lap and she took her seat in a blazing fire. Holika was unaware that the boon only worked when she entered the fire alone. Legend has it that Prahlad kept chanting the name of Lord Vishnu and unharmed while Holika was burnt to ashes.

Another story tied to the Holi Festival is that of Radha and Krishna.

Holi is celebrated in the Hindu calendar month of Phalgun, which usually coincides with the Gregorian calendar month of March, or sometimes even late February.

It is a two-day festival commencing on a full moon night, (Purnima) with Holika Dahan. Main Holi festival is celebrated the next day of Holika Dahan.

During the celebration we sing traditional /folksongs called “Chautal”. Chautal is a form of folk song of North India’s Bhojpuri region. Chautal is only sung in the “Phagwa or Holi festival. The lively rhythm and the beating of drums entices everyone to join in singing and dancing.

Holi is celebrated by the Hindu Heritage Society, in Sydney annually, although Holi Festival is primarily celebrated by Hindus, the Holi Festival is very inclusive. One of the main themes of the festival is unity and togetherness. So, while the Holi Festival is rooted in Hindu tradition, it is a celebration that happens in all major cities in Australia.

In Sydney we invite family and friends to come together and invite them to throw away their inhibitions and join in as “a one big colourful group”. People of all nationalities and age groups join in, covering each other with coloured powder, (rangoli). The vibrancy of the colours brings in a great deal of positivity and rejoicing.

This celebration is a demonstration of the richness of the Hindu culture and traditions which fosters a deep sense of community and togetherness.

Holi celebration organised by Hindu Heritage Society truly encapsulates the essence of this ancient festival. The harmonious melodies of traditional instruments and chautaals all combine to create a memorable experience for all.

We end the day by hugging each other wishing a new beginning and forget past resentments and bad feelings.



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Traditional Chautala (folk song) singing in session with live instruments



**HHS Resident "Dholakia" Mr Satya Prakash with his wife Manita (left)
They are very devout Hindus and are always available to provide Instrumental music and
sing Bhajans at HHS functions**



Holi Khele Raghubeera - Sydney Australia mein Holi Khele Raghubeera



Children enjoying Holi



Burn your ego, expectations and ill thoughts in the fire of Holi .

Let the colours of Holi spread the message of peace and happiness .



Guru Purnima Celebrations hosted by the HHS

Pt. Jagdish Maharaj and Abhi Bohra

Guru Purnima is an annual festival celebrated in India and Nepal to honour and express gratitude towards one's spiritual teacher or Guru. It falls on the full moon day or Purnima of the Hindu month of Ashadha, which usually falls in July or August.

On Guru Purnima, devotees pay homage to their Gurus by performing various rituals and expressing their gratitude. The day begins with a traditional puja or worship of the Guru's feet, followed by chanting of mantras and devotional songs. Some devotees also offer gifts or donations to their Gurus as a token of respect and gratitude.

Guru Purnima is celebrated not only by Hindus but also by followers of other spiritual traditions such as Buddhism and Jainism. It is believed that Gautama Buddha gave his first sermon on this day at Sarnath, and so it is also known as Buddha Purnima

The term "guru" typically refers to a spiritual teacher or guide in Hinduism, Buddhism, or Sikhism. In these contexts, a guru is someone who has attained a level of spiritual enlightenment and imparts their knowledge and wisdom to their disciples or followers.

The word "guru" comes from Sanskrit, an ancient Indian language of India. In Sanskrit, "guru" means "teacher" or "guide." The word has been used for centuries in India and other parts of South Asia to refer to spiritual teachers and mystics who have achieved a level of wisdom and enlightenment.

Guru Purnima is a spiritual festival celebrated by Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs. It is typically celebrated on the full moon day (Purnima) in the Hindu month of Ashadh (June-July), and is also sometimes known as Vyasa Purnima. The festival is particularly associated with the sage Vyasa, who is credited with editing and compiling the ancient Vedic texts of India, including the Mahabharata. On Guru Purnima, it is believed that Vyasa was born, and some Hindus also perform pujas in his honor on this day.

The festival is dedicated to the guru, an important figure in our region where gurus are considered to be a spiritual guide, teacher, and mentor. It is a time to honor and express gratitude towards one's guru for their guidance, knowledge, and support on the spiritual path.

Here is a small list of the Guru's as there are many great spiritual teachers, saints and masters in each religion who have guided and inspired millions of people over the centuries.

Hinduism:

- a. Swami Vivekananda
- b. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa
- c. Swami Sivananda
- d. Paramahansa Yogananda
- e. Mata Amritanandamayi. Etc.

Buddhism: a. Gautama Buddha b. Dalai Lama c. Thich Nhat Hanh d. Ajahn Chah e. Pema Chödrön

Jainism: a. Mahavira b. Acharya Kundakunda c. Acharya Shantisagar d. Acharya Hemachandra e. Acharya Bhikshu

Sikhism: a. Guru Nanak b. Guru Arjan Dev c. Guru Gobind Singh d. Bhai Gurdas e. Bhai Nand Lal are some examples.

In Hindu traditions, the mother is considered to be the first guru of a child, as she is the one who teaches the child their first words, instills moral and ethical values, and provides a foundation for their spiritual development.

The importance of a guru or spiritual teacher in our life can be significant in many ways, regardless of one's religious or philosophical beliefs

1. The guru can provide guidance and support on the spiritual path, helping us to navigate through the challenges and obstacles that arise along the way. The guru can offer teachings and practices that can help us to deepen our awareness and understanding, and to cultivate virtues such as compassion, wisdom, and gratitude.

2. A guru can serve as a mentor or role model, offering insights and perspectives based on their own life experience and spiritual realization. This can be especially valuable when we are facing difficult decisions or transitions, as the guru can provide a broader perspective and help us to stay rooted in our spiritual values and priorities.

3. The guru can offer a sense of community and support, connecting us to a wider network of spiritual seekers who share our values and goals. This can be especially important for those who may feel isolated or disconnected in their spiritual journey, or who may not have access to other sources of spiritual community or support.

4. Finally, the guru can offer a sense of inspiration and motivation, reminding us of our own potential for growth and transformation, and helping us to stay committed to our spiritual path over the long term.

Guru Purnima is an important festival that should be celebrated worldwide. It offers an opportunity as devotees to honor our gurus for their spiritual guidance, teachings, and support. The festival is an occasion for reflection, meditation, and celebration among devotees seeking to deepen their spiritual connection and understanding.

On this day, disciples perform pujas, seek the blessings of their gurus, and listen to their discourses. Overall, Guru Purnima is a time to reflect on the importance of teachers and mentors in our lives, and to commit ourselves to the pursuit of our growth and enlightenment with their guidance and support.

Overall, Guru Purnima is a day to celebrate the profound relationship between a Guru and his or her disciples, and to acknowledge the role of the Guru in guiding one towards spiritual growth and enlightenment.



Collection of prominent Gurus' Photo Proudly on display with a brief outline of their story for people to read and be inspired during Guru Purnima celebrations.

Why Guru Purnima is our Sanskriti Diwas

Hindu religion is the world's oldest religion. When, how or where its origin is, is not only difficult but near impossible to ascertain. It is widely believed that the Lord himself is the preceptor of this religion.

The great "Seers" believe the universe was created by the Lord and all in it is His creation also. The Vedas believe that each element of His creation is not only sacred but next to being "DEVAS" or Goddesses.



This "shloka" in the Vedas is proof of it:

"Agnir devta, Vaato devta, Suryo devta, Chandrama devta, Vasvo devta, Rudra devta, Aaditya devta, Maruto devta, Vishvadeva devta, Brihaspatirdev-tendro devta, Varuno devta". (14 – 20).

Lord Brahma created the universe in His own form and handed over the responsibility of preservation and destruction to Vishnu and Rudr respectively.. Lord Vishnu took numerous incarnations to rid the universe of sins and preserved religion and heritage on earth. The effect of this is today present in all corners of the world. However, the aim of all folks is the same – salvation.

Thousands of years ago Hindu religion was prominent in most parts of the world. However, advent of other religions, effects of war and natural migratory practices saw a diminishing effect in Hindu religious beliefs and cultural changes. About 5 thousand years ago Lord Vishnu incarnated as "Vedavyas' ' who reinvigorated the Hindu religion, with the blessing of Lord Ganesha and Mata Saraswati, through the Vedas and other Puranas and Upanishads.

Guru Purnima is celebrated to recognize the birthday of Vedavyas and the historical significance that he has to our culture and heritage. All the Sects associated with Hinduism, celebrate and honor their own "GURUS" on this auspicious occasion. They pray to them and remember their sacrifices to have preserved the religion and heritage for the forthcoming generations.

The Hindu Heritage Society has recognized this event as their main celebration each year. It is our firm belief that this will help propagate a sense of "belonging" to our future generations. In recognition of the Rishis, Munis and various Gurus each year we pay absolutions to them. So far we have held events such as:

- Sarva Dharma Sammelan,
- Shri Krishna Leela,
- 108 Shiva Linga Abhishek,
- Shri Vishnu Sahastra Naam Yagya,
- 108 Kundi Maha Yagya
- 1,111 Hanuman Chalisa Parayan,
- Akhand Ramayan Path,
- Lalita Sahastra Naam chanting
- Shri Hari Gita Gyan Yoga etc.
- Samuhik Shri Satya Narayan pooja

From time to time HHS has also displayed articles and pictures of these revered Gurus at our events. To us and our devotees, they are an important link to our great religious heritage.

Although the festival of "Raksha Bandhan" is typically known as the Sanskriti Diwas, in our view the "Guru Purnima" fulfills this definition appropriately.

Vedavyas Ji was born to provide this path to our heritage and the Lord's incarnation was for the purpose of Sanskriti Diwas celebrations.

As the national defence force protects the boundary of the country –likewise religion and heritage protects one's inner belief and personal space. This is an opportune day to celebrate the vast sacrifices of our Gurus and HHS provides you with this opportunity to partake in this event and offer thanks and obeisance to your Gurus.

Jai Gurudev

Questions and answers regarding Guru Purnima

Q. When is Guru Purnima and would you please explain for the benefit of many, the significance and why Gurus are so important in our lives and Hinduism at large?

A Firstly, let us understand who a Guru is and its true meaning.

Guru Purnima is the day Vyas Ji was born. It is religiously known as VYAAS JAYANTI, the author of THE VEDAS and PURANAS.

In Hinduism we revere and adore our GURUS. On behalf of every True Hindu and God Lovers, we will endeavour to stipulate the essence of a Guru and their innervations.

In Sanskrit GU- means darkness or ignorance in its true context. RU-Means remover of the same and illuminates the spiritual path.

Hindu scriptures assert that more valuable than gold and diamond, also far rarer, is a GURU, a knower of spiritual truths, also may reach to be a Sat Guru (Most top Guru Status through his spirituality).

A Guru is the devotee's best friend, a father, a mother, a trusted confidant, the demanding mentor and guide on the path to God. The Guru embodies all that the spiritual seeker aspires to be. In the Guru, one sees his own infinite potential. Hindus honour these rare leaders and the Guru Purnima, or the FULL MOON Day in June/July, the Hindu Month of Ashada. (आसढ.)

Q. What is Guru Purnima and how to celebrate it?

A. Firstly, we would like to say that the Guru Purnima is not a festival but a propitious and meritorious and highly adorable day for a true Hindu, therefore is religiously observed and not celebrated. This is the annual observation which honours spiritual teachers, preceptors and mentors who dispel the darkness of ignorance by bringing forth wisdom and illumination. Purina (Purnima) is the Sanskrit word for full moon. I have already explained other relevancies above.

Q. What are the customs of Guru Purnima?

A. On this special day all of one's thoughts are focused on the holy preceptor, turning into his mind, meditating on his teachings and expressing gratitude for his blessings and guidance. In ashrams, monasteries, halls, homes, shrines and Tiraths, etc. Hindus gather to venerate the Guru of their lineage. This is as valuable, as far as possible the one' should use the Guru from the Guru's Lineage. We understand this is not practical in view of many circumstances, as the lineages are not worthy of being a Guru for various obvious reasons.

The day's primary activity is a formal ritual, called Puja, in which his holy feet or a pair of his sandals are honoured.

At the Guru's major centres, the Puja is a grand event, preceded by Satvik Meals (veggie and sweets) is served or offered to The Guru if visited at his home. It is especially auspicious to pilgrimage to the Guru's ashram or home on this day. In today's calamitous times a Guru and Shishya (disciple concept) has become, rather incorrigible and faux. When Guru and Disciple are in aspect, the slander communication is rather a faux veneration. There is a saying: -

गंगा बडी न गोदावरी, ना तीरथ बडे प्रयाग, सकल तीरथ का पुन्यः वही' जहा' ह्रिदय राम का वास

Means wherever and however, you perform PENANCE, it will not be benefiting or meritorious. You must have Ram Ji, reside in your heart. I will rather be precise and specific; the heart or inner self must be pure and cleansed to welcome The Lord residing within you. You do not expect any one to live in a polluted home so how will the lord.

Q. Why is the Full Moon of Ashada the day of the Guru and the first day of learning dedicated to honouring the preceptor (spiritual teacher).

A. It is believed this custom became established as Vyas Purnima, the Guru of Vedic knowledge. Here Full Moon refers to illumination (knowledge) and Guru Purnima, the Birthday (Jayanti) of Vyas Ji, the source of all spiritual knowledge. The full moon is also known as a propitious (auspicious) time for attaining fulfillment, completeness, spiritual advancement and the beginning to all new endeavours.

Q. Why are the Guru's feet the focus of veneration?

A. According to tradition, God's presence can be most clearly and completely felt in the illumined Guru.

To sit at his feet is to be close to God and our own deepest Self because he is the giver of Dharmic Knowledge and all nerves' currents terminate in the feet. Vital energy points relating to every organ of his physical and inner bodies—astral (Godly), mental (thoughts of mind) and soul (pertaining to religious values)—are there. Touch the feet and we touch the spiritual master. Venerating the feet of the guru is also an acknowledgement of our deepest respect and spiritually advancing our knowledge by following his footsteps, therefore, we will attain spiritual perfection. We bow down, in salutation.

Q. Are Gurus worshiped as God?

A. A few Hindu denominations worship their Gurus as the embodiment of God, and may even revere him as an avatar, but most Hindus see their Guru as a great illumined soul in whom God's presence is most powerfully apparent. I will not suggest you compare a Guru with God. Even the Guru's picture must not be kept on the same altar or platform as the God's, keep it a step below. The Mantra below is generally misinterpreted. It is usually the thoughts of iffy minds. The Lord is the ultimate truth.

Q. Would you please explain a Guru's role?

A. It is the Guru's task to lead aspirants to God? He sets souls on the spiritual path, corrects those who stray, softens karmas, inspires lifelong practice and, through initiations, awakens the seeker's super, conscious knowing. He helps us become aware of our shortcomings and strengths and gives us tools to overcome weaknesses and refine ourselves.

The Guru, knowledgeable in Hindu scriptures, its sacred, practical and philosophical treatises, has the ability to help us unlock their esoteric meaning and gain insight as we study. Generally, this is not the case nowadays, it is all faux shamefully.

He guides us in our meditations, helping us navigate the mind and ultimately transcend it. In today's time it is rather impossible to find a true Disciple and Guru; it is rather calamitous, maligned.

Q. What is Darshan and its values?

A. Darshan, literally means "sight," and is the mystical meeting of Guru and the Devotee. Hindus travel great distances to experience Darshan and receive the blessings of the illumined soul established in his enlightenment. Hindus believe that the spiritual power, called Shakti, coming from a great soul accelerates their spiritual evolution, changes patterns in their life by purifying their subconscious mind, renewing their spirit and commitment to religious life.

Q. Are all Gurus supposed to be unmarried?

A. Hindu spiritual teachers or Gurus may be either unmarried or householders. Many Hindu institutions are led by luminaries who follow the householder path. Some Gurus however, are celibate Monks—Swamis, Sadhus or Acharyas—who have renounced worldly life and received initiation into a monastic order.

Q. Are Gurus centrally organized?

Hinduism is actually a multitude of faiths and lineages bound together by common beliefs and practices. There is no central organization. Each Guru within his or her own sphere of devotees is the authority on religious matters, his or her wisdom sought and words obeyed. Some are heads of institutions with large followings, while others are reclusive Sadhus who rarely appear in public, but yes, they must be religiously Astral.

Q. What are the Traditional Offerings for a Guru?

When visiting a guru, just as when going to a temple, devotees bring an offering, such as flowers, sweets, fruits (a lime is traditional) and, for renunciation of The Gurus, a piece of unstitched cloth is offered as well.

These items are presented in a Basket or on a metal tray. A monetary gift, called Dakshina, wrapped in a betel leaf (Paan), is often included. In ancient days, Gurus were given gold by the king and cows by the wealthy to sustain their schools and allow them to freely share wisdom.

Q. Fact & Fiction in this regard.

A. FACT: Hindus consider the mother to be a child's first Guru. She and the father are responsible for their offspring's upbringing, welfare and education. Upon coming of age, youth may turn to a Guru to begin their spiritual training.

FICTION: Some incorrectly criticize Hinduism as a world-negating faith that overemphasizes asceticism and austerity. In fact, while its large contingent of celibate monks pursues the path of renunciation, yoga and deep meditation, the vast majority of Hindus are householders dynamically engaged in family life, career and community service. Tradition affirms the pursuit of four goals: righteousness, wealth, pleasure (including sensuality) and liberation. काम, अर्थ धर्म और मोक्ष !

Your heart should melt and flow toward God. Only then can you attain His grace. People may talk as they please; do not be carried away by them. Unmindful of hardships and difficulties, hold on to the principle of divinity and reach the goal of life. Today, people lack the will and determination to reach the goal of life.

How can those who do not understand the goal of life attain it? True love cannot be fragmented. One cannot have love for God as well as for ephemeral (short lived) objects and relationships. The love which is fragmented is artificial only. I may sound inimical but your thoughts must be circumspect as you have only one heart.

For example, you cannot break it into pieces and distribute it to various people. It is not like a Ladoo or sugar cane, which can be broken into pieces and distributed. It is the eternal truth. It is nectarous and full of bliss. Ignoring the immortal bliss within, people tread the worldly path thinking that bliss lies therein. It is only a figment of their imagination. He who makes efforts to attain God with full faith and determination without caring for trials and tribulations is a true devotee

Q. What is it that you are supposed to know on this day of Guru Purnima?

You must understand that God is in you, with you, around you, above you, below you. In fact, you are God. Let me reiterate on the Panch Tatva, that the living bodies are made of, including Bhagwan. His Almighty as well ascends to our Earth in any body form like other species. We are analysing the word BHAGWAN.

BH- Bhoomi. A- Agni. G- Ganga or Gal. W- is Wayu. A- Aakash (Ether) and N- refers to Nirgun (formless) . Recognize this truth in the first instance. Do not entertain excessive desires and become beggars. Do your duty sincerely. That is the true Sadhana.

Durga Pooja

Navaratri Celebrations and The Hindu Heritage Society Devi puja

compiled by Mrs Prem Lata Maharaj & Kaveeta Maharaj.



The Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) holds a special place in their hearts for the grand celebration of Durga Puja, a major Hindu festival commemorating the victory of Goddess Durga over the formidable demon Mahishasura. This vibrant festival, filled with enthusiasm and devotion, holds a significant position, particularly in West Bengal, Assam, and Odisha, where it is celebrated with great fervor.

The ten-day long festival, usually occurring in the Hindu month of Ashwin, sets the stage for an awe-inspiring celebration. The tale of Goddess Durga's triumph over Mahishasura serves as a reminder of the power of good prevailing over evil. In Hindu mythology, the gods, unable to vanquish the demon, combined their strengths to create the mighty Goddess Durga. Her valor and prowess led to the defeat of Mahishasura, restoring harmony to the universe.

During Durga Puja, the Hindu Heritage Society brings together friends and family to rejoice in the triumph of good. Elaborate rituals form an integral part of the festivities, including the worship of Goddess Durga and her nine forms, known as Navadurga. Skilled artisans meticulously craft and adorn idols of the Goddess and her avatars with vibrant flowers, radiant lights, and ornate embellishments. The devotees hold these idols in high reverence and offer prayers with utmost devotion.

The celebration of Durga Puja extends beyond religious rituals and delves into a realm of cultural events. The air is filled with melodious music, graceful dance performances, and captivating drama enactments. It is a time for artistic expression and creativity to flourish. Additionally, the aroma of delectable food and sweets wafts through the air as families and communities prepare and share sumptuous meals together.

Embracing the spirit of the festival, people don new clothes and visit beautifully crafted pandals, temporary structures erected to house the magnificent idols of Goddess Durga. These pandals serve as sacred sanctuaries where devotees gather to offer their prayers and seek the blessings of the Goddess. The atmosphere brims with devotion, joy, and a sense of unity as people from all walks of life come together to pay homage to the divine.

Durga Puja holds profound significance, not only as a time of celebration but also as an occasion to reflect on the triumph of good over evil. It is a period of spiritual renewal and an opportunity to express gratitude for the protection and blessings bestowed by the mighty Goddess Durga. As one of the most prominent festivals in the Hindu calendar, Durga Puja brings people together, fostering a sense of togetherness and reinforcing the values cherished by the Hindu Heritage Society.

The Hindu Heritage Society wholeheartedly embraces the essence of Durga Puja, promoting the celebration as an integral part of their cultural preservation and awareness efforts. Through their participation and support, they ensure that the spirit of this joyous festival continues to thrive, reminding everyone of the power of righteousness and the significance of unity in the face of adversity.

Every year devotees come and enjoy the melodious bhajans, Archana and Aarti. We have travelled to different suburbs over greater Sydney and in some years we have completed 9 days of prayer at devotees' residence.

What is Durga means?

The word *Durga* (दुर्गा) literally means "impassable", "invincible, unassailable". It is related to the word *Durg* (दुर्ग) which means "fortress, something difficult to defeat or pass" as stated in the Devi-Atharvashirsha Upanishad.

यस्याः परतरं नास्ति सैषा दुर्गा प्रकीर्तिता ॥२४॥

She who is renowned by the name "Durga" is superior to whom no one exists.

As Durga Saptashati stats, She is eternal, embodied as the universe. By her all this is pervaded. Nevertheless, she incarnates in manifold ways; hear it from me. When she manifests herself in order to accomplish the purposes of the devas, she is said to be born in the world, though she is eternal.

Maa Durga in Hinduism the Goddess Durga also known as Shakti or Devi, is the protective mother of the Universe. She is one of the faith's most popular deities, a protection of all that is good and harmonious in the world. Sitting astride a lion or tiger, the multi-limbed Durga battles the forces of evil in the world.

The name Durga means the Invincible one. As the Consort of Lord Shiva, Durga is the most auspicious one, the daughter of mountains and the remover of obstacles.

Durga Puja coincides with Navratri and Dussehra celebrations observed by other traditions of Hinduism. Over the years Durga pooja has morphed into an inseparable part of Indian culture with a diverse group of people celebrating this is their unique way while on traditions

Our ancients have prescribed the worship of Maha Kali, Maha Lakshmi and Maha Saraswati during Navratri (nine nights).

Durga is the embodiment of all powers.

Durga represents the combination of all the powers of body, mind and soul. Maha Kali symbolises destruction of evil with the help of these powers.

The significance of Nava Durga?

प्रथमं शैलपुत्री च,द्वितीयं ब्रह्मचारिणी ।

PRATHAMAM SHAILPUTRI CHA DWITIYAM BRAHMACHARINI

तृतीयं चन्द्रघण्टेति,कूष्माण्डेति चतुर्थकम् ॥

TRITIYAM CHANDRAGHANTETI KUSHMAANDETI CHATURTHAKAM

पंचमं स्कन्दमातेति,षष्ठं कात्यायनीति च ।

PANCHAMAM SKANDMAATETI SHASHTHAM KAATYAYNEETI CHA

सप्तमं कालरात्रीति,महागौरीति चाष्टमम् ॥

SAPTAMAM KAALRAATRITI MAHAGAURITI CHAASTAMAM

नवमं सिद्धिदात्री,च नवदुर्गाः प्रकीर्तिताः।

NAVAMAM SIDHHIDAATRI CHA NAVDURGAAH PRAKEERTITAAH

Goddess Durga represents protection, love, prosperity, and knowledge. Unlimited and vibrant love, compassion and mercy are regarded as the divine attributes of Mother Goddess. She is known as Durga and worshipped in different forms.

Although she has over 1000 names and many different forms, the main 9 forms are as below;

1. SHAEL PUTRI - Goddess Parvati, the daughter of the King of the Mountains Himalava, is called as 'Shailputri". In her previous birth she took birth in the house of Dakhsa, the Prajapati, as his daughter. She was also known as Sati. Once Prajapati Daksa organized a very big sacrificial ceremony in which he invited all gods to receive their sacrificial share. Lord Shiva was the only exception.

2. BRAHM-CHARINI - The second Durga Shakti roop is of Goddess Brahmcharini. Brahmcharini originated from the word "Brahma" that is who observes penance (tapa) and good conduct. Thus she is the one who practices penance. she practiced terrible penances in order to obtain Lord Shiva as her divine consort. Due to her unearthly penances she was termed as Brahmcharini.

3. CHANDRA-GHANTA - Third among the Shakti Roopas is Goddess Chandraghanta. Chandraghanta originated from the word Chandra (Moon) and Ghanta (Bell). She has crescent moon on her forehead and her roaring voice is like a tumultuous sound of a bell that makes the atrocious demons tremble. By worshipping her one can get rid of all worldly sorrows, and attain the supreme goal spontaneously.

4. KUSH MAANDA - The fourth among Shakti Roopas is goddess Kushmanda. Kushmanda (Ku+Usma+Anda) has been originated from the word 'Ku' means 'a little'; 'Usma' is warmth, heat or energy and 'Anda' means the cosmic egg or universe. She resides in the universe, in the inner portion of Surya loka and she emanates a solar aura. Kushmanda devi helped create the brahmand or universe when there was nothing. Except darkness everywhere.

5. SKHAND MATA - Skandmata is also called Parvati, Maheshwari and Gauri. Being the mother of Skanda she is Skandamata. Riding a lion, she holds her son Skanda in her lap. She displays three eyes and four hands - two hands holds lotus while the other two hand display defending and granting mudras, respectively. It is said that by pleasing Skandmata, even a fool becomes a master of knowledge.

6. KATYAANI MATA – Sage Katyayana practiced penance for several years to propitiate mother Goddess. At the time of boon he requested Mother Goddess to take birth as his daughter. The goddess was pleased to accede to his request. She accepted the worship of Katyayana for three days and then killed the demon Mahisasur.

7. KAAL RATRI MATA - most known as maha kali devi. she derived her name from her looks being completely dark black (kala). although her features appear scary, devotees who worship find immense benefits and help in resolving daily problems.

8. MAHA GAURI - like her name, this devi is completely gaura (or fair). As parvati, she did a lot of sacrifice to find lord shiva as husband despite so much opposition from families; rishi munis (saints).

9. SIDHI DATRI - gives you 18 main elements like wealth & health in life. Shri devi puran says that with the blessings of this devi, did lord shiva earn half female body for himself.

Devis Weaponry and its significance

Durga carries a variety of weapons and other items that she uses in her fight against evil. Each has a symbolic meaning important to Hinduism; these are the most significant:

The conch shell symbolizes the Pranava or the mystic word Om, which indicates her holding on to God in the form of sound.

The bow and arrows represent energy. By holding the bow and arrows both in one hand, Durga demonstrates her control over both aspects of energy—potential and kinetic.

The thunderbolt signifies firmness in one's convictions. Just as a real bolt of lightning can destroy anything it strikes, Durga reminds Hindus to attack a challenge without losing confidence.

The lotus in Durga's hand, not yet fully in bloom, represents the certainty of success but not finality. The lotus in Sanskrit is called Pankaj, which means "born of mud," reminding the faithful to stay true to their spiritual quest amid the worldly mud of lust and greed.

The Sudarshan-Chakra or beautiful discus, which spins around the index finger of the Goddess, signifies that the entire world is subservient to the will of Durga and is at her command. She uses this unfailing weapon to destroy evil and produce an environment conducive to the growth of righteousness.

The sword that Durga holds in one of her hands symbolizes knowledge, which has the sharpness of a sword. Knowledge free from all doubts is symbolized by the shine of the sword.

The trident or Trishul is a symbol of three qualities: Satwa (inactivity), Rajas (activity), and Tamas (nonactivity). Deva uses these to alleviate physical, mental, and spiritual suffering.

Durga's Transport- In Hindu art and iconography, Durga is frequently depicted standing atop or riding a tiger or lion, which represents power, will, and determination. In riding this fearsome beast, Durga symbolizes her mastery over all these qualities. Her bold pose is called

The Dasha (Ten) Mahavidyas

**KALI TARA MAHAVIDYA SODASHI BHUVANESWARI.
BHAIRAVI CHHINNAMASTA CHA VIDYA DHUMAVTI TATHA.
BAGALA SIDDHA VIDYA CHA MATANGI KAMALATMIKA.
ETAHA DASAMAHAVIDYAAHA GUPTA VIDYAAHA PRAKEERTITAAHA.**

In Tantra, worship of Devi-Shakti is referred to as a Vidya. Of the hundreds of tantrik practices, the worship of the ten major Devis is called the Dasa Mahavidya. These major forms of the goddess are described in the [Todala Tantra](#). They are

1-Kali, 2-Tara, 3-Maha Tripura Sundari (or Shodasi-Sri Vidya),
4-Bhuvaneshvari, 5-Chinnamasta, 6-Bhairavi, 7-Dhumavati,
8-Bagalamukhi, 9-Matangi, and 10-Kamala.

These ten aspects of Shakti are the epitome of the entire creation. Chapter 10 also outlines their consorts, although Dhumavati, the widow form, is not allocated a consort.

There are several "levels" at which these Devis can be worshiped with the prescribed Mantra and Yantra. Like a simple worship of the yantra with the mantra recitation, as a remedial astrological measure, elaborate worship with all tantrik rituals for obtaining various siddhis associated with these tantras and for spiritual salvation.

Successful sadhana of these Vidyas gives several boons to the practitioner. The Tantrik-Yogi who has control over his senses and is positively inclined uses the boons to guide people and for the benefit of mankind. The ones whose head starts spinning with success use them for the gratification of the senses, gather a bunch of disciples around them and become fake gurus.

The last chapter of todala Tantra equates Vishnu's ten incarnations with the ten Mahavidyas as follows:

"Shri Devi said: Lord of Gods, Guru of the universe, tell me of the ten avatars. Now I want to hear of this, tell me of their true nature. Paramesvara, reveals to me which avatar goes with which Devi.

"Shri Shiva said: Tara Devi is the blue form, Bagala is the tortoise incarnation, Dhumavati is the boar, Chinnamasta is Nrisimha, Bhuvaneshvari is Vamana, Matangi is the Rama form, Tripura is Jamadagni, Bhairavi is Balabhadra, Mahalakshmi is Buddha, and Durga is the Kalki form. Bhagavati Kali is the Krishna murti." (Todalatantra, chapter 10)

The worship of these is also prescribed as an astrological remedy – for the 9 planets and the Lagna as follows:

Kali for Saturn, Tara for Jupiter, Maha Tripura Sundari (or Shodasi-Sri Vidya) for Mercury, Bhuvaneshvari for Moon, Chinnamasta for Rahu, Bhairavi for Lagna, Dhumavati for Ketu, Bagalamukhi for Mars, Matangi for Sun, and Kamala for Venus.

The tantric worship of these most powerful Vidyas must be practiced only under the guidance of a siddha Guru.



Durga Maa with offerings of Red Chunrari from her Devotees



Kanya pooja during Durga pooja.

प्रथमं शैलपुत्री च, द्वितीयं ब्रह्मचारिणी । तृतीयं चन्द्रघण्टेति, कूष्माण्डेति चतुर्थकम् ॥
 पंचमं स्कन्दमातेति, षष्ठं कात्यायनीति च । सप्तमं कालरात्रीति, महागौरीति चाष्टमम् ॥
 नवमं सिद्धिदात्री, च नवदुर्गाः प्रकीर्तिताः। उक्तान्येतानि नामानि, ब्रह्मणैव महात्मना ॥



Gita Jayanti:

By Mrs Lalita Singh:

Gita Jayanti is a very important day for Hindus. On this day, the holy book of Hindus, Bhagavad Gita was born, ie Gita Jayanti is the day when Lord Shri Krishna told the Gita to Arjuna. It is celebrated on Shukla Ekadashi on the 11th day of Margashirsha month of the Hindu calendar. The Bhagavad Gita was described by Lord Krishna himself before the Mahabharata war began. It is believed that in the Mahabharata, the seeds of the Pandavas and the Kauravas had decided to go to war even after every possible reconciliation effort.

Gita Jayanti is an annual celebration to commemorate the day when Lord Krishna rendered his philosophical teachings and imparted the essence of Vedic knowledge to Arjun, over 5000 years ago. Krishna enlightened Arjun about the ultimate goal of life. The sermon is delivered on the battlefield of Kurukshetra in an epic battle full of ethical dilemmas. But that is only metaphorical, for it quickly moves beyond the immediate context of the battlefield to the larger realm.

When Arjun refused to fight against his cousins, the Kauravas in the battle, Lord Krishna sent forth the truth of life and the philosophy of Karma and Dharma to him, thereby giving birth to one of the world's greatest scriptures: the Gita.

The ***Bhagavad Gita*** is considered to be the most important and influential Hindu scripture for its philosophical, practical, political, psychological, and spiritual values. Bhagavad Gita Jayanti, or simply Gita Jayanti, marks the birth of this holy book. According to the traditional Hindu calendar, Gita Jayanti falls on the Ekadashi day of Shukla Paksha, or the bright half of the Margashirsha month.

The ***Bhagavad Gita*** is not just an ancient scripture, but even today, it also serves as an essential guide to the 'Art of Living'. ***Gita*** prompts an individual to think, to make a fair and just decision, and to look at life from a different perspective, without surrendering one's identity. The Gita has been addressing contemporary issues and solving everyday problems of humanity for many thousands of years, the relevance of which should not be just confined to the mystical and spiritual pursuits.

The timeless and universal message of Gita is all-encompassing in its expression of truth. Bhagavad Gita means the "Divine Song," the divine communion of truth-realization between man and his Creator, the teachings of Spirit through the soul, that should be sung unceasingly.

We learn from the Bhagwat Gita about the permanence of universal truth, and if it is universal, it must be so for the entire mankind.

For thousands of years Gita has been a spiritual and philosophical guide to an entire civilization. Sages, scholars, philosophers, religious teachers and leaders alike, have all tried to interpret its message for us, they have dived to its depth to understand its mes-

Such is the power of the Divine Message. It is timeless and universal; it endures through time and space. It is difficult for anyone to claim to have fully understood it. Gita is a journey of discovery, with no destination bar, only constant progress.

We should not reduce Gita to reading and rituals only. We should deep dive in it, understand the message behind it, and relate it to our lives.

It goes without say that we should celebrate Gita Jayanti continuously, not only for offerings and prayers, but also for discussions and debates, in order that the next generation can begin to think deeply on the message and relate it. So too, for older generation who

Bhagvat Gita Mahatmya (Glories) by Adi Shankaracharya

**GITA SHASTRAM IDAM PUNYAM, YAH PATETH PRAYATAH PUMAN
VISHNOH PADAM AVAPNOTI, BHAYA-SHOKADI VARJITAH**

(1) He who studies this Gita scripture with humility is freed from fear and misery and attains the feet of Lord Vishnu.

**GITA ADHYAANA-SHILASYA, PRANAYAMA-PARAASYA CHA
NAIVA SANTI HE PAAPANI, PURVA JANME KRITANI CHA**

(2) That person who is in the habit of reading the Gita and who is also devoted to practising pranayama (breathing exercises) is not touched by sins, even those done in his previous birth.

**MALA NIRMCHANAM PUMSAM, JALA SNANAM DINE DINE
SAKRID GITAMBHAASI SNANAM, SAMSARA MALA NASHANAM**

(3) Human beings must bathe in water every day to get rid of the dirt (of the body), but bathing in the water of the Gita once is enough to get rid of the dirt of this samsara (cycle of birth and death).

**GITA SUGITA KARTAVYA, KIM ANYAIH SHASTRA VISTARAIH
YA SVYAM PADAMA NABHAAYASA, MUKHA PADMAD VINIH SRITA**

(4) This Gita which has come out of the lotus-like face of the Lord (He who has the lotus in His navel) and which is so melodious, should be studied. There is no need to study any other scriptures in detail.

**BHARAT AMRITA SARVASAM, VISHNOR VAKTRAD VINI SRITAM
GITA GANGODAKAM PITVA, PUNAR JANMA NA VIDYATE**

(5) After drinking the water of the Gita which is the nectar of the entire Bharata (the epic Mahabharata) and which has come out of the mouth of Vishnu, there is no more birth (in this world).

**SARVO PANISHADO GAVO, DOGDHA GOPALA NANDANAH
PARTHO VATSAH SUDHIR BHOKTA, DUGDHAM GITA AMRITAM MAHAT**

(6) All the Upanishads are the cows, the one who milks the cows is Krishna, Arjuna (Partha) is the calf. Men of purified intellect are the enjoyers; the milk is the great nectar of the Gita.

**EKAM SASTRAM DEVAKI-PUTRA-GITAM, EKO DEVO DEVAKI-PUTRA EVA
EKO MANTRAS TASYA NAMANI YANI, KARMAPY EKAM TASYA DEVASYA SEVA**

The only scripture is the song of the son of Devaki. The only deity is the son of Devaki. The only mantra is His Names. The only action is the service of That Deity.

(7) let there be one scripture only, one common scripture, for the whole world—Bhagavad-gita. let there be one God only for the whole world—Sri Krsna.

Let there be one hymn, one mantra, one prayer only—the chanting of His name:.. let there be one work only—the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Lord Shiva in Gita Mahatmya, states that "only one God - Krishna, the son of Devaki".

PROFILE OF 20 AWARDEES WHO MADE THE JOURNEY OF HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY MORE IMPACTFUL

HINDU COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA



Hindu Council of Australia is a peak body organisation founded in 1998 with an aim to create a strong and unified Hindu community in Australia. Since HCA was founded, it has been acting as a representative of the Hindu community in Australia in dealing with the federal, state and local governments, apart from reaching out to other Hindu organisations and institutions

Hindu Council of Australia's mission is to work for a strong, cohesive and active Hindu community in Australia, aiming to live in harmony with other religious and cultural communities while also devoted to preserving, promoting and sharing Hindu faith, culture and traditions with others in the society.

Hindu Heritage is a member organisations with the Hindu Council of Australia.



Shri Vijay Singhal ji, Director of Hindu Council of Australia is receiving best community service award on behalf of HCA.

SANATAN DHARMA SABHA OF AUSTRALIA.

SHREE RAMA KRISHNA MANDIR AUSTRAL, NSW

The Shree Sanatan Dharm Sabha of NSW inc is a religious organization based in New South Wales, Australia. It is dedicated to promoting and practicing the teachings of Sanatan Dharma, which is also known as Hinduism. The organization runs the Ram Krishna Temple in Austral (Sydney), which is a place of worship and community center for the Hindu community in the area.



Pt Narayan Bhatt together with Mr Ajay Singh (President of Shree Rama Krishna Temple)



Shri Ajay Singh ji, President of Sanatan Dharma Sabha of Australia is receiving best community service award.

SANATAN DHARMA BRAHMAN PUROHIT MAHA SABHA

The Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha has three primary objectives at its core. Firstly, it aims to provide services that meet the religious, spiritual, and cultural needs of the Hindu community in Australia. Secondly, it seeks to promote Hindu rituals through educational programs and the training of prospective Hindu priests.

Lastly, the Sabha strives to ensure that all Sanatan Vedic samskaars (sacraments) are performed according to the rituals prescribed in the Vedas, Purans, and Upanishads. In addition to these key objectives, the Sabha engages in various projects involving the Ethnic Hindu and other communities, including celebrations such as Saraswati Devi poojan for children, Indra/Ganga poojan, Maha Mritunjai yagan, Maha Gayatri yagan, and Kirtan samelan. The educational program, which has become a favorite topic among members, is seamlessly integrated into the routine administrative work conducted during monthly meetings.

The Sabha maintains strong relationships and collaborative work ethics with brother organizations such as the Sanatan Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia, Sanatan Dharam Sabha of NSW, Hindu Heritage Society of Australia, Hindu Clergy Society, Sita Ram Mandir in Carramar, as well as several other organizations from India, Fiji, and New Zealand.



Pandit Amrit Prasad ji, Ex-President of Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha, Australia is receiving best community service award on behalf of BPMS.

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF HINDU CLERGY

The Australian Council of Hindu Clergy (ACHC) is an organization that represents the interests of Hindu priests and clergy in Australia. It was founded in 1989 and aims to provide a unified voice for the Hindu community in matters relating to religion, culture, and tradition.

The ACHC comprises Hindu priests and spiritual leaders from various sects and traditions of Hinduism. Its main objectives include promoting the practice of Sanatan Dharma, preserving the cultural heritage of the Hindu community, and providing guidance on religious and spiritual matters to the community.

The ACHC also plays an active role in promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding. It works with other religious and cultural organizations in Australia to promote harmony and mutual respect among different communities.

One of the key initiatives of the ACHC is the training and certification of Hindu priests and clergy. It offers a range of courses and training programs to help individuals become qualified priests and spiritual leaders, and also provides ongoing support and guidance to those already in these roles.

Overall, the Australian Council of Hindu Clergy is an important organization that serves the needs of the Hindu community in Australia, and helps to promote the values and traditions of Sanatan Dharma in the country.



Pandit Krishnamurthy Venkatraman ji, the President of ACHC, is receiving best community service award.



VISHVA HINDU PARISHAD OF AUSTRALIA INC NEW SOUTH WALES

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) Sydney is a chapter of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a global Hindu organization dedicated to promoting Hindu culture and values worldwide. The VHP Sydney was established to serve the needs of the Hindu community in Sydney, Australia, and promote the practice of Sanatan Dharma.

The VHP Sydney is involved in a range of activities and initiatives aimed at promoting Hindu culture and values. It organizes cultural events, festivals, and religious celebrations, and provides educational resources on Hinduism and Indian culture. The organization also works to promote interfaith dialogue and understanding, and engages with other religious and cultural groups in the community.

One of the key objectives of the VHP Sydney is to promote the welfare of the Hindu community in Australia. It provides support and assistance to individuals and families in the community, and advocates for the rights and interests of the community at a local and national level.

The VHP Sydney also plays an active role in promoting social and environmental causes. It supports various charitable and humanitarian initiatives in Australia and India, and works to promote sustainable living and environmental awareness.



Overall, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad Sydney is an important organization that serves the needs of the Hindu community in Sydney, and helps to promote the values and traditions of Sanatan Dharma in the country.

Mrs Akila Ramarathinam, National General Secretary, Hindu Dharma Scripture Coordinator SRE Provision NSW Public Schools, is receiving the best community service award.



SYDNEY SANSKRIT SCHOOL

School Of Vedic Sciences (Aust) Inc.

Sydney Sanskrit School, affiliated with the School of Vedic Sciences (Aust) Inc., was established in 2006 to fulfill the need for a community language school teaching Sanskrit primarily to the migrant community in Australia. With the support of well-wishers and community members, it became the first Sanskrit community language school under the NSW Community Languages program. The school's curriculum focuses on reading, writing, speaking, and listening to Sanskrit, introducing students to the Upanishads, Puranas, Ramayana, and Mahabharata through stories, rhymes, and songs.

In 2011, the school affiliated with Sura Saraswati Sabha, Dakshinamnaya Sringeri Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya Peetam, providing certifications for Sanskrit learning. The school has witnessed tremendous growth, with students achieving the third level of Sanskrit exams, equivalent to a bachelor's degree.

The school has also released a bilingual songbook, "Yabun" (Matra), showcasing a blend of Sanskrit and indigenous Aboriginal culture. Students actively participate in recitals and competitions, receiving unwavering support from the Hindu Heritage Society and Sri Man-



Representatives from Sydney Sanskrit School are receiving the best community service award.

॥ न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशम् ॥
'Nahi Jnanena Sadrsham'

meaning nothing is comparable to knowledge.

Knowledge of Sanskrit to our younger generation will open the doors for further exploration and research in to the vast Vedic literature which is still so relevant and of high importance in this technological world.

GREEN VALLEY HINDI SCHOOL

Green Valley Hindi Language and Arts School (GVLAS) is dedicated to providing excellent cultural and language education services under the guidance of the NSW Department of Education and the NSW Federation of Community Language Schools.

The school offers Hindi language classes from kindergarten to grade 12, including the opportunity to study Hindi at the Higher School Certificate (HSC) level. In addition to language education, GVLAS also offers art classes, including vocals, harmonium, tabla, and Bollywood/Bharatanatyam dances.



President Mr Deo Narayan ji is receiving the best community service award.

निज भाषा उन्नति अहै, सब उन्नति को मूल, बिन निज भाषा-ज्ञान के, मिटत न हिय को सूल।

अंग्रेजी पढि के जदपि, सब गुन होत प्रवीन, पै निज भाषा-ज्ञान बिन, रहत हीन के हीन।
उन्नति पूरी है तबहिं जब घर उन्नति होय, निज शरीर उन्नति किये, रहत मूढ सब कोय।

-भारतेंदु हरिश्चंद्र



IABBV HINDI SCHOOL

इन्डो ऑस्ट्रेलियन बालभारती विद्यालय-हिन्दी स्कूल पदब

The Indo-Aust Bal Bharathi Vidyalaya Hindi School (IABBV-Hindi School) was established by a group of migrant mothers from India who wanted their children to maintain their language and culture in Australia.

The school provides Hindi language education to children and adults, fostering bilingualism and biculturalism. In addition to language classes, the school offers a diverse curriculum including sports, music, drama, dance, and cultural exchange.

The supportive environment of the school allows students to connect with others facing similar challenges and helps them shape their identities as Indo-Australians. Supported by the NSW DTEC Community Languages program, IABBV-Hindi School operates as a non-profit organization run entirely by volunteers.

With multiple classes and over 140 students each year, the school covers a wide range of ages and proficiency levels, preparing students for Hindi language exams and offering comprehensive Hindi education in Sydney



Representatives together with Mala Mehta , an Order of Australia Medal recipient and President/Honorary Founder of The Indo-Aust Bal Bharathi Vidyalaya are receiving the best community service aware.

हिंदी हमारी आन है हिंदी हमारी शान है,
हिंदी हमारी चेतना वाणी का शुभ वरदान है,

SWAMI NARAYAN SANSTHAN (BAPS)



The Swaminarayan Sansthan, commonly known as BAPS (Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Sanstha), is a global Hindu organization dedicated to the spiritual, social, and cultural upliftment of individuals and communities. Founded in 1907 by Bhagwan Swaminarayan, BAPS follows the teachings and principles of Swaminarayan Bhagwan and is guided by its spiritual leader, His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj.

BAPS centers around the world serve as hubs for religious worship, education, and humanitarian services. The organization promotes moral values, family harmony, and selfless service through various activities, including spiritual discourses, festivals, youth programs, and socio-economic initiatives.

BAPS is known for its magnificent temples, intricate craftsmanship, and devotion to the principles of spirituality, knowledge, and unity. With millions of followers worldwide, BAPS continues to inspire individuals towards a balanced and fulfilling life rooted in spirituality and ser-



Representatives together with Shri Dinesh Pandya ji from VAPS Sydney are receiving the best community service award.

JAI SWAMI NARAYAN

JAI SWAMI NARAYAN

JAI SWAMI NARAYAN

NATYANIVEDAN:

for promoting Bharat Natyam in Sydney Natya Nivedan school of cultural dance such as Bharat Natyam has voluntarily participated in HHS programs from time to time and has a good reputation in the community.



Natyanivedan & Guru Smt. Nikhila Kiran

Natyanivedan, a sincere and dedicated school aspiringly endeavours to propagate this elegant, divine and ancient form of dancing to the world with the blessings of God, Gurus & Elders. This is a presentation of Bharathanatyam to the community established in the year 1997 in Sydney imparting training in classical Bharathanatyam. The school offers technical & professional training of this divine art to students. In the last few years Women's group classes have been introduced as well allowing women in pursuit of Bharathanatyam seeking Bharthi path in this way.

Guru Smt Nikhila Kiran is the disciple of **Natyacharya Guru Sri H R Keshavamurthy**. After completing Diploma in Bharathanatyam by Keshava Nrithya Shala, she obtained Vidwath Grade (Proficiency) in Bharathanatyam from Karnataka State Education Board. She is a graded artist in Doordarshan channel 9. Vidushi Nikhila Kiran discovered her passion for dance at an early age, fascinated by the deep connection of body, mind and soul. Upon arriving in Sydney to a community largely unaware of Indian classical arts, she felt compelled to propagate this art form to younger generations. Nikhila has dedicated 26 years of her tireless efforts to continue the passing down of ancient Indian values and customs. She is an internationally recognised teacher and performer, but her greatest reward will always be watching her young girls blossom into empowered women. Smt Nikhila Kiran fiercely encourages her students to train their bodies as much as their minds, making them do various body weight exercises and yoga. In this way she is not only empowering young girls and women mentally and spiritually, but also physically.



Guru Nikhila Kiran believes in giving back to the society through the art form, hence has participated in many charity events like raising funds for Cancer Council Australia through their event Dancing with the Stars, Fundraising for Westmead Hospital, fundraising for artists in India affected during Covid, Hindu Council of Australia, Sri Venkateswara Temple Helensburgh, Sri Siddhi Vinayaka Temple at Townsville and many more organisations for various great causes.

As a Choreographer & Director, Vidushi Nikhila Kiran in her conceptual production Sharanaagathy, Bhajanaa-Natya, Ramayana Katha Nrithya, Shri Krishna Namamrutham, Prakruthi and Andal these were very experimental. Under her able tutelage and guidance many arangetrams, salangai puja and productions have met great public appraisal.

She has been conferred with many accolades for her work in this divine art form, including the highly coveted Aryabhata International Award, Gargi Award by Hindu Council, awards by Sydney Kannada Sangha, United Indian Association and Basava Samrithi Australia wing for her contribution to Bharathanatyam.

The Natyanivedan recently got accepted and accredited by International Dance Council - COD, and is recognised by UNESCO.



Smt Guru Nikhila Kiran ji, from Natyanivedan is receiving best community service award.

Dhram Jeet Singh & Son

i



(Left a photograph of late Mr and Mrs Dharam Jeet Singh of Raraleve Nausori. Both Mr and Mrs Singh were born in Fiji)

Long term supporter of the Hindu Heritage Society with regular donations to HHS events over the years since its inception as Kala Mandir

This is the story of Dhram Jeet Singh Indian Diaspora – Mrs Prem Maharaj’s great Grandfather, (Par Aaja/or Par Dada in Hindi), Late Thakur Kuldip Singh, was one of the Original Girmitya’s from India. He arrived on board the ill-fated Syria Jahaj on 14th May, 1884. The ship

Thakur Kuldip Singh's family was settled in Raralevu after completing the Indentured period of 5 years. They moved to the present property on the Raralevu mountain area. The family has been in this place for over 100 years. The landmark is the Dharam Jeet Singh Store. This was established in 1943. Thakur Kuldip Singh’s family originally hails from Bihar in India. The families have been in contact all these years. Letters were exchanged regularly between the parties in India and Fiji

The Hindu Heritage Society is grateful to the extended family members of the Dharam Jeet Singh Family who have volunteered their time and have also contributed financially towards the events that have been hosted by the Society. May the Blessings of the Almighty always remain upon your family.



The grand children are receiving best community service award on behalf of late Dharam Jeet Singh family.

SHRI MUKESH & LATA GUPTA JI



सेवा करने से आत्म-सन्तोष,मानसिक तृप्ति, संवेदनशीलता, समवर्तिता, आत्मानुशासन और समर्पण के मानवीय भावों तथा गुणों में अभिवृद्धि होती है और व्यक्ति की आत्मिक शक्तियों का विकास होता है।व्यक्ति का आत्म बल बढ़ता है।श्रद्धा और विश्वास रूपी शक्तियों में प्रगाढ़ता आती है।कठोर से कठोर साधना करने से जो सिद्धियां प्राप्त होती है, वह सभी सिद्धियां निःस्वार्थ भाव से सेवा करने से स्वतः प्राप्त हो जाती है।

Mukesh Gupta is a business owner and has a very important role in the Indian community in Australia.

Originally from Ludhiana Punjab, India residing in Sydney since 1998.

Gupta ji comes from a business family background and is a loyal husband, devoted father of 3 successful professionals and a grandfather.

The Indian charitable organisations in Australia always get needed support from the Gupta family and Hindu Heritage Society also received his cash and kind support when approached.



Shri Mukesh and Lata Gupta ji are receiving best community service award on behalf of Gupta family.

Shree Sanatan Dharm Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia



Our organisation propagates the teaching and philosophy of Hinduism and allied religious cultures in accordance with Vedic Sanatan Dharma. We also promote sports, music, arts, meditation and other cultural art forms.

Our organisation also uses resources to encourage participation in bhajans, kirtans, folk songs and pravachans as collective and communal forms of religious cultures



On behalf of Sanatan Dharma Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia, Pdt Shalendra Maharaj ji is receiving the community service award.

PDT. HARISH SHARMA



Harish Chandra Sharma is a former Fiji Indian politician who became the leader of the National Federation Party in 1987. He was also the leader of the organisation representing most of the Hindus in Fiji, the Shree Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji.

Mr Sharma was born in Nausori, Fiji in 1932. He worked as a civil servant and as an insurance agent before departing for Tasmania in 1960, where he received the LL.B. from the University of Tasmania in 1964. On his return to Fiji he first worked for Sidiq Koya then for A. D. Patel, before setting up his own law firm in 1969. He was nominated to the Senate by the Leader of the Opposition in 1970 and remained a Senator until the 1972 general election

Mr Harish Sharma was the President of the Fiji Law Society from 1989 to 1990. In 2007 he was honoured with the life membership of the Fiji Law Society. He finally retired from the practice of law at the end of 2002 after a career spanning 38 years. He migrated to Australia in January 2003

Social and religious contribution

Pandit Sharma was a founding member of Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji which was formally formed on 29th November 1958 at the Sanatan Shiv Mandir Samabula. He was later the secretary of Sanatan Dharam Shiv Mandir, Samabula and was actively involved in the formation of the national body. After 35 years he was elected the national president of the Sabha and held the position successively for ten years

Upon his retirement he was awarded "Sanatan Ratna" and made life member of Shri Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji. He was awarded a second "Sanatan Rattan" by Shri Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha of N.S.W. inc in November 2013 for his services to the Sanatan community in Australia

In February 2018 he was honoured with "Hindi Gaurav Samman" by International Hindi Parishad Adharshila

He helped establish Korovuto Secondary school which is now known as Korovuto College and was its very first manager for a period of ten years. He was later made life member of the school on retirement.

He also helped establish Nawai Junior Secondary School, now known as Nawai Secondary School and was its manager for more than a decade. Made life member of the school on retirement. Both the schools have made amazing progress since inception

Mr Sharma enrolled as a law student at the University of Tasmania at the beginning of 1960. He formally qualified as a lawyer at the end of 1964. He practised law for one year in Hobart, Tasmania under a Queen's Counsel

Legal Career

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He also helped establish Nawai Junior Secondary School, now known as Nawai Secondary School and was its manager for more than a decade. Made life member of the school on retirement. Both the schools have made amazing progress since inception Upon his return to Fiji, he joined Koya and co as a Legal practitioner in 1966.

Joined A.D Patel and Co in 1968 as Mr. Patel's Associate. Upon Mr. Patel's death formed the firm of Patel and Sharma with Mr. P. B Patel.



SANATH & NIRLA PANDEY (Brisbane)

Pundit Sanat Pandey is married to Nirla Pandey and has two daughters and four grandchildren. He is a retired Chartered Accountant who migrated to Australia in 1987 after the first coup in Fiji. Pundit Sanat Pandey has dedicated most of his time to his community, especially the Fiji Indian Community.

As a practising Hindu priest, Pundit. Sanat Pandey offers his services to the Gayatri Temple in Boondall, Lakshmi Narayan Temple in Burbank and Sanatan Centre in Berrinba conducting prayer meetings and giving sermons during religious ceremonies such as Shiv-Ratri, Ram Naumi, Krishna Janam-Ashtami, Hanuman Jayanti, etc. He also conducts Sola-Sanskar prayers according to the needs of various devotees. He is also a Religious and Civil Marriage Celebrant and he has conducted several marriage ceremonies locally, nationally and destination

He also conducts funeral rites and many other religious ceremonies as and when required by the Indian Community. He has authored a book titled 'Lakshmi Poojan for Diwali' and is currently writing an additional book on 'Sixteen Sanskaars'.

He is actively involved in promoting and supporting the study of the Hindu religion at various educational levels. Being invited to speak at Graduation Ceremonies in different Faith Centres is a testament to his knowledge and expertise in the Hindu religion. Such opportunities allow him to share his insights and inspire graduating students as they embark on their next chapters in life. Providing interpreting services to hospitals, government institutions, and courts indicates his linguistic abilities and willingness to bridge communication gaps. Interpreters play a crucial role in ensuring effective communication between individuals who speak different languages, and his contributions in this area are commendable.

Offering prayer services to sick patients in hospitals is a compassionate act. Providing spiritual support to those who are unwell can bring comfort and solace during challenging times. It's wonderful that he has been able to provide this service to those in need.

Collaborating with the State Government to prepare a booklet specifically tailored to the needs of Hindu patients is another noteworthy endeavor. Such initiatives demonstrate a commitment to enhancing cultural understanding and ensuring appropriate care for individuals from diverse religious backgrounds.

Overall, his dedication to volunteering and serving various communities through different roles reflects his passion for his faith and his desire to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

Pundit Sanat Pandey has been serving community members as a qualified Justice of Peace since the year 2000 and has been involved in numerous fund-raising projects for the poor, needy and temples. He is a regular speaker at various Senior Citizen Associations and religious organisations. He has been the vice president of Lakshmi Narayan Temple at Burbank for numerous years and also served as a treasurer and auditor for various religious groups. As a highly respected and trusted Priest, he is also called upon to help people having





ARYA PRATINIDHI SABHA OF AUSTRALIA.

Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia Incorporated was formed on 15th February 1994. In 2003 APSA purchased 69 Shane Park Road at Shanes Park NSW and established their office.

The members of APSA participated in Arya International Maha Sammelans in Delhi and Singapore. This inspired us and Arya International Maha Sammelan was held at our Shane Park property from 27th November to 29th November 2015. It was a very successful event. We have been successfully organising Yog, Meditations and Vedic Studies throughout Australia. Various scholars and parcharaks have been successfully conducting Vedic teaching here. In near future more scholars from Bharat will be arriving here to conduct Vedic Dharma teaching etc.

I would like to extend, special thank you to all our members, support groups, friends and well wishers, who worked continuously to bring the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia to what it is today.

God bless you all .

Suresh Chand

President/Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia.





NEPALESE HINDU COMMUNITY

Nepalese Hindu Society of Australia (NHTA) is an organization to preserve Hindu religion and practice Hindu rituals continuously for all Hindus.

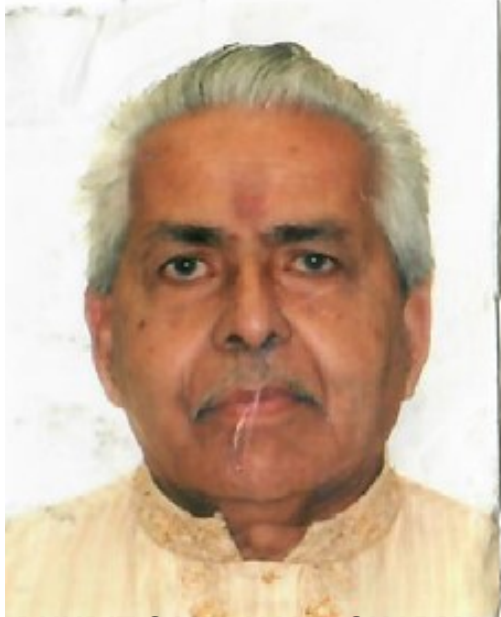


It was established in 2011. NHTA serves all Hindus living in Australia according to Hindu religion through a voluntarily available Hindu Priest to carry out the religious activities, which will be required during birth, death and other necessary ritual religious activities in an affordable method according to Hindu religion.



On behalf of Nepalese Hindu Society Australia, Pdt Prakash Dodhari ji is receiving the community service award.

Pundit Sada Nand Sharma



PUNDIT SADA NAND SHARMA

I have much pleasure in writing about a nonagenarian, who “single handedly” saved the Hindu /Sanatan Dharma in Sydney Australia.

Pandit Sada Nand Sharma was born in Ba in the western division of Fiji. He was a first generation Fijian Indian Diaspora to arrive in Australia in 1973, as a practicing Sanatani purohit, still in the “White Australia Policy”. The number of Hindus in Australia at that time were few.

While in Fiji he was a practicing Hindu purohit, conducting all Sanatani rituals, including weddings, funeral rites and other samskaras.

He together with Pandit Khushi Ram Sharma and Pandit Ramayan Maharaj was instrumental in establishing the WAILAILAI KUTI (Mandir), which to this day is still a well known Mandir, patronized by thousands of devotees each year.

In Australia he was yearning to establish a similar Mandir, he quickly partnered with one Mr. Gyan Singh and others formed the FIRST Sanatan Dharm Mandir in Sydney, Australia at Chipping Norton. As the patronage increased, the Mandir was later relocated to more spacious premises at Prestons near Liverpool. Pt. Sadanand was the first “Sansthapak ” and “Pracharak in both of these mandirs. Today this Mandir is in AUSTRAL, LIVERPOOL, the SANATAN DHARM RAM KRISHNA MANDIR, boasting a modern mandir, function hall and a huge carpark. Pt. Sadanand is still associated with this mandir, although not as a fulltime priest.

In addition to a practicing purohit, he was the first Hindu Marriage celebrant appointed in Australia.

His entire family followed him to Australia in 1978. He has been doing Ramayan Prachar; Kirtan bhajans and katha pravachan in Sydney ever since.

Pt. Sadanand ji has performed many weddings, officiated at numerous funerals and provided counselling to many in need.

With ailing health, he now performs with reduced workload, but is still active in the Hindu community.

He is regarded as a father figure, in so far as the Hindu community and the Sanatan Dharm in Sydney is concerned.

Mr. Ashwin Govind and Mrs. Namita Govind are highly respected members of the community who have made a significant contribution to promoting cultural heritage and supporting charitable causes in Sydney. Their commitment to giving back and making a positive impact on the world around them is truly inspirational.



Mr. Ashwin Govind and Mrs. Namita Govind are receiving an appreciation certificate on Silver Jubilee celebration of HHS 2023.

HHS secretary Mr Anant Maharaj and Smt Kavita Maharaj presenting the certificate.

Pandit Shailendra Maharaj

My Ancestral Journey from India to Fiji and to Australia



Pandit
Shailendra Maharaj
Commonwealth
Registered
Marriage Celebrant
and JP NSW
and
Mrs Malti Maharaj



My grandfather Pundit Ram Charitar Maharaj was brought to Fiji under the British Indenture system. He arrived in Fiji in September 1913 and travelled on the SS Ganges No2. He was from Gorakhpur Belwa Jila, Uttar Pradesh. On the SS Ganges No2 there were a total of 784 Indians being brought to Fiji. Many got sick on the voyage, and some passed away before reaching Fiji.

After completing five years of indentured labour contract, my grandfather was given 2.5 acres of land by the Colonial Sugar Refinery Company and settled in Daku village, (Fijian name Dakuina). Daku is forty Kilometers (twenty-five miles) from Labasa town on the island of Vanua Levu. My grandfather walked for kilometers to get to homes where he would perform the poojas. My elder brother and I often accompanied him on these pooja visits.

My father Pandit Ram Dutt Maharaj was the second child among five brothers. He was married to my mother Tara Wati and I am fifth among my eight siblings. My maternal grandfather Pundit Mahadeo Maharaj, was born in Fiji and my maternal great grandfather Pandit Ram Bharos Maharaj was born in India, however, very sadly the exact details of the name of the Jila or district he came from has been lost.

I am very grateful to my grandparents and parents who preserved the Hindu religion and culture in Fiji and passed on their language, religion and culture from generation to generation. My uncle Pundit Hari Dutt Sharma after doing tireless search was successful in tracing our ancestral connections and visited my grandfather's home in Gorakhpur, Belwa Jila on 17 November 2010.

I hold a Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of the South Pacific and I moved to Australia in 1989 with my wife Malti and two sons, Kavish and Akshay. Kavish is married to Saras and they have a son Aryan. Akshay is married to Vikantha.

Since moving to Australia, we have always been affiliated to Ramayan Madali's. This has allowed my family and I to continue to celebrate all the Hindu Parvas. Being part of the Hindu community has enabled us to keep our language, religion and culture alive. In our Australian Fijian community, we celebrate Holi, Ram Navami, Krishna Ashtami, Navratri and Diwali festivals.

My family and I have been closely associated with Pt Narayan Bhatt ji and the Hindu Heritage Society since 2006. The HHS is a non-profitable organization and promotes Hindu religion, language and culture. Malti and I are now retired and we continue with our work with HHS to promote our Hindu religion, language and culture so that our future generations continue with their Sanskriti, Sabetha and Sanskar.

On this occasion of HHS's 25th anniversary, I together with my family wish the Society and its members best wishes in the future.



From L-R Top :

Padma Shandil,

*Pt. Sukhendra
Shandil*

Bottom:

Namrata Shandil,

Viraat Shandil,

Vivaan Shandil

and

Sachin Shandil.



Pundit Sukhendra Shandil, a third generation Fiji Indian now living in Sydney, Australia is following in the footsteps of his ancestors in serving the community.

His great grandparents and grandparents late Pt. Ramdin Shandil and Pt. Sarju Prasad Shandil of Dauesh district, Kamhari Thana, Sagoui village, India arrived in Fiji on 27 March 1904. For a brief period, they lived in Samabula, Suva and later moved to the second largest island, Vanua Levu and provided community services as a Hindu priest.

His grandparents and parents were very actively involved in helping in establishing temples, schools and Ramayan Mandalis' in Fiji to ensure Hindu culture and religion were kept active.

Pt. Sukhendra is the youngest son of Late Pt. Muni Prasad and Basuda Shandil and is a practicing Hindu priest. He is married to Padma Shandil, and they have two children and two grandchildren.

Some of the achievements in community services as listed below:

Past President of Suva Jaycees

Past Vice President of Fiji Jaycees

Past Member of Sanatan Dharam, Suva, Fiji

Past Secretary of Navyuak Satsangh Ramayan Mandali

Member of Hindu Heritage Society

Members of Australian Council of Hindu Clergy

General Secretary of Brahman Purohit Maha Sabha of Australia

Recipient of Youth Exchange program to Queensland, Australia, 1984

Recipient of Rotary International student exchange program, Oregon, USA, 1985

Pundit. Sukhendra is very actively involved with Hindu Heritage Society, Brahman Purohit MahaSabha of Australia and Ramayan Mandli's in promoting religious and cultural activities.

He has been associated with HHS for over 20 years and have many treasured memories. Over the years we have formed a very strong bond among the members which saw my family being actively involved in the HHS activities in one way or another. I value the principles and values of the HHS and fellowship which has made me a better person.

Some of the highlights where I took active roles at HHS as follows:

Represented HHS at the Australian Hindu Council meetings and supported in the organising Deepavali puja.

Assisted in organising a conference for all Priests from Brahman Purohit MahaSabha of Australia, Australian Hindu Clergy and HHS.

Initiated and successfully organised Hindi Oratory Contest for Hindi schools in Sydney region.

Service to the community is the best work of life and through small contributions that we can make for the wellbeing of all we can make the world a better place to stay.



Pandit Sukhendra Shandil ji is receiving an appreciation certificate on Silver Jubilee celebration of HHS 2023.



Shri Indar K Nair and Mrs Damayanti Nair ji receiving an appreciation certificate on occasion of silver Jubilee celebration of HHS on 2023.

Shri Indar K Nair
Profile by Dr Dipak Singh

Indar Kumar Nair is among the very few singers from the Indo-Fijian community who has not only excelled but is a sought-after performing artist in Australia.

He is a versatile singer who sings most genres, from folksongs, bhajans, Bollywood melodies and ghazels. Being a regular guest of Radio Fiji in the 1980s gave him national acknowledgement. Release of his songs by **T Series of India** inclusive of other platforms such as **Red Ribbon and Sheemaroo Music** has given him global recognition which is a matter of pride for many music lovers.

It must be noted that writing lyrics and singing is his leisure. Although he has not taken up music as his principal occupation, Nair has fascinated and excited his listeners wherever he performed. As an artist he is deeply passionate.

His particular style of singing is akin to meditation where the artist brings out the value and insights of the stanzas.

Such a talent is a rare gift where the artist does justice to the composition of the prose. In this way his talents are scholarly where many see Nair as a symbol and an icon of Indian music.





Pt Shashi Maharaj

My Grandparents where from 'teerthraaj' Prayaag UP India and my Fiji born parents were Ram Lakshman Maharaj and Lilawati Maharaj.

In 1986 married ever loving and caring Saras Maharaj and our daughter Shivika Maharaj and son Shonit Maharaj were also born in the island nation.

Migrated to Australia in 1991 and settled in Sydney.

Very privileged to have done teerth yatra to India, Nepal and Kailash Mansorowar on numerous occasions and twice during Maha Kumbh in Prayaag and Haridwaar got the blessings of His Holiness Anant Shri Vibhushit Dwaarka Shaarda Peethadhishwar Jagad Guru Shankaraachaarya Swami Shri Swarupananda Saraswati Ji Maharaj.

It's been a pleasure to be associated with the Hindu Heritage Society in

Australia and I am very thankful to Param Pujniye Pt Narayan Bhatt Shastri Ji for passing his Karmakand Vidhya and aashirvaad to make me what I am today.

Namo Narayan





PDT BHARAT SHARMA

Pdt Bharat Sharma was born and raised as a Hindu by his parents - Ms Ifa Sharma and Pdt Davendra Sharma. He plays harmonium and dholak and instruments with as much flair as he is able to recite difficult mantras and shloks and does perform weddings, funerals, as well as other poojas and havan.

Trained under Shahstri Pdt Narayan Bhatt - founder of Kalaa Mandir, the original form of Hindu Heritage Society - Pdt Bharat Sharma is a confident individual with loads to offer to our ever growing Hindu community in Australia.

From early age, Pdt B Sharma attended weekend Hindi vernacular classes from 2004-2008.

He also undertook music lessons to become a keen artist in singing both bhajans, kritans and faag sangeet. He has performed and obtained awards at many public events.

At his tender age of 14, Pdt B Sharma took his Guru diksha from Pdt N Bhatt and under his care, he has also recited sapta parayan katha - Devi bhagvat, Ramayan, Shiv Maha Puran and srimadh bhagvat Gita. From the year 2008, Pdt B Sharma also started performing puja vidhi around Sydney at various localities and homes. Later, he also mastered performing 16 sacraments like weddings and funerals.

He has travelled around NSW, Queensland and Fiji to perform sanatan dharma rites and puja vidhi.

While on his annual teerath yaatraa, Pdt B Sharma also undertook sanskriti classes in



AJOYDHYA from Pdt Laljan Tiwari, a local scholar.

In 2015, Pdt B Sharma acquired membership of Australian Council of Hindu Clergy - the premier organisation representing Hindu priests around Australia. It was under ACHC, he obtained credentials to perform funerary rites after attending a course in 2022.

Pdt B Sharma is also a co founder of Hindu Cosmos Mandir - also operating as Sri Shani Sankat Mochan Mandir Sydney.

He is a regular priest at that Mandir as well as a preacher there.

Pdt B Sharma is a man of all occasions and is admired and respected by many in our Hindu community in Australia.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

The Following people have received a certificate of appreciation from the Hindu Heritage Society for her tireless efforts in organizing and promoting cultural events and festivals in the community over the last 25 years.

Individuals who have been helping HHS including foundation and Life members.

Pdt Bhalchandra Adhikari ji from Nepalese Hindu Society of Australia was invited to recite Swasti Vaachan from **Rig Veda**.

"Rig Veda" is the oldest of the Vedas, and one of the oldest extant texts in any Indo-European language.

This Rig Veda is considered to be one of the four sacred Veda texts in Hindu religion. The depth of the texts in the canonical is called the Rigveda Samhita.

This is a collection of over a thousand hymns known as suktas and well above ten thousand verses which have been created into ten mandalas or books.

Pandit Bhalchandra is well known priest in Nepalese Community Australia. He works for Hindu community through Nepalese Hindu Society of Australia

Acharya Lalbahadur Mishra, Chief Priest at Shri Shiva Mandir Minto NSW, was invited to recite Swasti Vaachan from **Yajurved**.

Pdt has served Australian Hindus from 1996 through Minto Shiv Temple and is received well in the community. Pandit ji holds Acharyas degree from Sampurnanand Sanskrit University, Varanasi.

The Yajurveda is second of the four Vedas. It is said to have emerged out of the southern face of Lord Brahmā, the creator. It is also called as Adhvaryu veda, since it's main use is in the performance of the Vedic sacrifices where the adhvaryu is the chief priest under whose direct guidance the entire sacrifice is performed.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Pdt Krishnamurthi Venkatraman – President of Australian Council of Hindu Clergy was invited to recite Swasti Vachan from **Krishna Yajurveda and Sama veda.**

Pdt K. Venkatraman ji has completed Krishna Yajur Veda, up to Padam level. Also obtained Shastri Degree in Sanskrit. Besides this, he has studied B.Com and worked as an Executive Pers. & HR with Larsen & Toubro Limited, Jamshedpur and Baroda, India for 22 years.

The Yajur Veda is divided into two parts - the white or "pure" Yajur Veda known as Shukla, and the black or "dark" Yajur Veda known as Krishna. The white Yajur Veda deals with prayers and specific instructions for devotional sacrifices, whereas the black Yajur Veda deals with sacrificial rituals.

Samaveda is third in the usual order of the four Vedas. It is the second oldest Veda . There are two Upanishads embedded in Samaveda – Chandogya Upanishad and Kena Upanishad The Samaveda is considered as the root of the Indian classical music and dance It is considered as the storehouse of the melodious chants Though it has lesser verses than Rigveda, however, its texts are larger There are three recensions of the text of the Samaveda – Kauthuma, Raṇayaniya and Jaimaniya Samaveda is categorised into two parts – Part-I includes melodies called Gana & Part-II includes three verses book called Archika. Samaveda Samhita is not meant to be read as a text, it is like a musical

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Pdt Jatin Kumar Bhatt, the Chief Priest at Sri Mandir Auburn was invited to recite Swasti vachan from **Atharva veda.**

Pdt. Jatinkumar Bhatt has been full time priest of Sri Mandir since 2004 and has been one of the most respectable and recognised priest in the community since then. Pdt. Jatin-kumar Bhatt is a highly qualified priest with the degree of “**Jyotish Alankar**” and serves the community with free astrological consultations and counselling. Pdt. Jatin kumar Bhatt hold degree of Masters in Chemistry as his academic background.

The Atharva Veda is named after the legendary Vedic sage Atharvan, who is believed to have ‘heard’ this Veda, and then had it written down. Additionally, some have claimed that Atharvan means ‘fire priest’. The Atharva Veda is also known as the Atharvangirasa Veda, which attributes this sacred text to Atharvan and Angira, another Hindu sage. Compared to the other Vedas, the Atharva Veda was composed at a later date.

The Atharva Veda is divided into 20 kandas (equivalent to books), which contains a total of 730 suktas (meaning ‘hymns’). In total, the Atharva Veda has about 6000 mantras (meaning ‘verses’), most of which are metrical. It may be noted, however, that a small number of hymns, estimated to be about a sixth of the en-



HHS Committee members are cutting the cake

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

HHS volunteers who have provided their valuable support to this organisation and they have been there for over 20 years.

They are experts in all fields (no job is too small for them), from cleaning to presentation

They are also professional public figures in the community and parents and grandparents at homes. HHS indebted to you all.

Mr. Arvind & Mrs. Roselyn Narayan	Mr Satish + Mrs Sarita Sharma
Pt Sukhendra + Mrs Padma Shandil	Mr Nitendra + Mrs Pooja Singh
Pt Shailendra + Mrs Malti Maharaj	Mr Dhurup + Mrs Kiran Singh
Mr. Andrew (Mohitesh) Prasad + Mrs Prasad.	Mr Satish Singh + Mrs. Lalita Singh
Mr. Hemant Prakash	Mr. Kuar Pal & Mrs. Angela Sharma
	Mr. Anil + Mrs. Sony Kumar

Long term Key Associates of HHS. These members have been pillars of strength to the organisation and they have supported HHS when and as required by cash or kind or by volunteering their services.

Mr Ashok + Mrs Sudha Singhal	Mr. Yash & Mrs. Mamita Mishra
Mr + Mrs Hitendra Ram	Mr. Sashi + Mrs. Roma Singh
Mr. Anand Narayan	Mr. Anil Doma & Mrs. Swapna Doma
Mr. Dinesh + Mrs Anita Gupta	Mr Yadav + Mrs Basundhara Dhungel
Mr. Anil + Mrs Neelam Fulwaria	Mr. Satish + Mrs. Sashi Das
Mrs. Neera Shrivastav	Mr Amrit + Mrs Savitri Ram

Without help from our priests, it is impossible to carry on any religious or cultural activity.

HHS has been fortunate to have such a dedicated and knowledgeable community leaders to support HHS activities.

They have always supported HHS activities by keeping their personal and their own organisations activities aside assisting HHS as requested to carry on its activities.

HHS appreciates our musicians and dancers. These artists enliven our events with their melodies and dances.

Life Members

Pt. Sashi Maharaj
Pdt Gautam Sharma
Pdt Amrit Prasad
Pdt Davendra +
Pdt Bharat Sharma
Mr Anand + Mrs Ashika Prasad
Mr. Ashutosh Sharma
Mr Indar K Nair and Mrs Damyanti Nair
Mr Satya & Matina Prakash
Mrs Aruna Gandhi

Mr Padam & gayatri Lala
Mr. Kamal + Mrs Swapna Laha
Mr. Ashwin + Mrs Namita Govind
Mr. Sachin + Mrs Shivon Govind
Mr. Shamal + Mrs Neelam Singh
Mr Ramen + Mrs Pushpa Kumar
Mr Sunil + Mrs Sunita Mishra
Pdt Narayan & Radhika Bhatt
Pdt Jagdish & Prem Maharaj

Musicians who helped us to celebrate silver ju-

Mr Sanjesh Nand

Mr Shiva Chandiran

Mrs Shradha Tewari

Mrs Seema Bhradraj

Mr Raii Pranish

Mr Sajnesh Sagar



Mrs Seema Bhadraraj



Shradha Tewari ji

Senior Researcher for ICMR AIIMS.

learned Sangeet Vidya from Pandit Suraj Narayan from Lucknow

U.P state winner in Sugam sangeet and vocal singing winner for colours TV channel in Sydney, Australia and also performed at several shows in Sydney.

Aruna Gandji ji is performing her Nrityam



Natyavedan student performing the divine Natyam (Dance)



Mr Raii Pranish ji on Guitar



Mr Anand Prasad on Tabla

Puneet ji singing bhajan during silver jubilee of HHS 2023.



Siva Chandiran, a famous young singer is singing bhajan during HHS 25 years Celebration.



Sanjesh Sagar enjoying playing Octapad with Anand Prasad



Sanjesh Nand, well known Keyboard player is busy with his melodious tunes accompanied by his fellow musicians.



The audience enjoyed Seema j's melodious singing.



HHS 25th annual celebration was well received by devotees.



A very dedicated family Mr Kuar Pal Sharma and Mrs Anjala Indrani Sharma. HHS received the food donation from this family frequently.



Pranam ji, Kiran ji and Lata ji



Book published on occasion of silver jubilee celebration of HHS

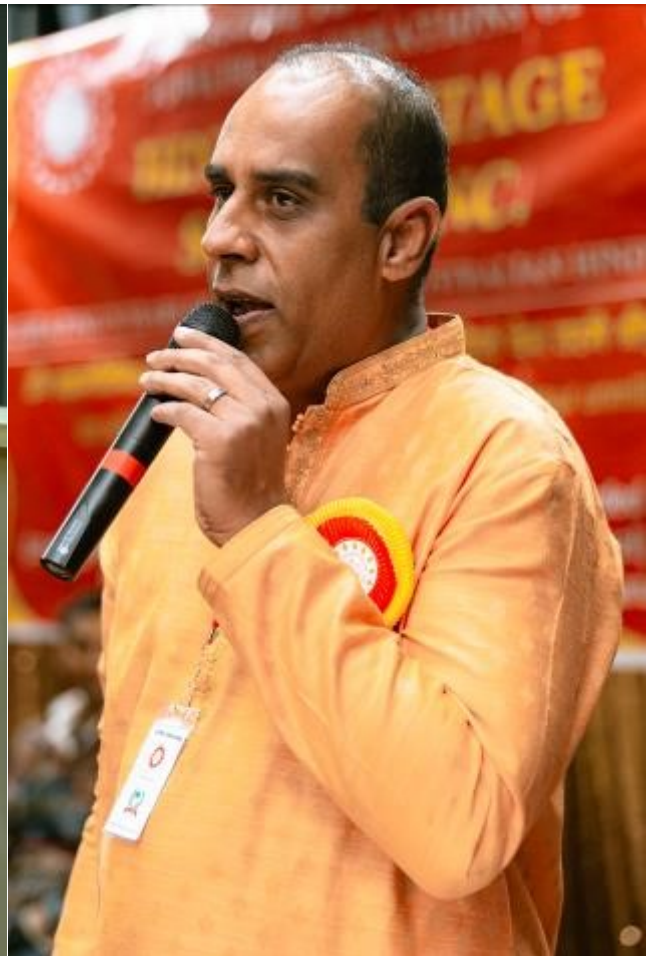




Guru Purnima celebration was well attended and enjoyed by many devotees.



Pandit Jagdish Maharaj ji,
Mr Anmol Maharaj AND Miss
Deepti Bhatt, all three MCs for the
event have done excellent job.
Thank you



Pandit Jagdish ji and Mr Anmol Maharaj.

Enthusiastic members of HHS after the completion of the program



HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY was one of the "Welcome Partners" for function of PM Narendra Modi during his May, 2023 visit to Sydney.



Deepti Bhatt. Daughter of Pdt. Narayan Bhatt ji And Shrimati Radhika Bhatt Ji, was one of the Officials Masters of Ceremonies for the Prime Minister Modi ji and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's Function in Sydney. She spoke to a crowd of 20,000 plus.

Her remarkable words were.

EK PYAS HI KAFI HAI SAAGAR TAK JAANE
KE LIYE
EK HAWA KA JHOKA HI KAFI HAI, THAN-
DAK PAHUCHANE KE LIYE
EK CHINGARI HI KAFI HAI UTKRANTI LANE
KE LIYE
APANA DESH PREM HI KAFI HAI, MODI JI
KE AANE KE LIYE.

The other important line she mentioned during her address were.

VASANT ME PHOOLON KA KHILNA ACHHA
LAGTA HAI
BAG ME BHANVARON KA MADRANA,
ACHHA LAGTA HAI,
AISE SAANSKRITIK MAHOTSAV ME AANAA
ACHHA LAGTA HAI,
VISHWA SHANTI KE DOOT MODI JI SE
MILNA, ACHHA LAGTA HAI

Replace photo with this image

एक प्यास ही काफी है सागर तक जाने के लिए
एक हवा का झोंका काफी है ठंडा पहुंचाने के लिए
एक चिंगारी ही काफी है उत्क्रांति लेन के लिए
अपना देश प्रेम ही काफी है, मोदी जी आने के लिए

वसंत में फूलों का खिलना अच्छा लगता है
बाग में भावरों का मडराना अच्छा लगता है
ऐसे सांस्कृतिक महोत्सव में आना अच्छा लगता है
विश्व शांति के दूत मोदी जी से मिलना, अच्छा लगता है



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was welcomed by around 20,000 cheering fans, many chanting “Modi,” at a Sydney stadium during his second visit to Australia as his country’s leader.

Modi shared the stage with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, who compared the reception by the primarily Indian crowd at Qudos Bank Arena to a concert by U.S. rock star Bruce Springsteen at the same venue.





HINDU HERITAGE SOCIETY was one of the "Welcome Partners" for function of PM Narendra Modi during his May, 2023 visit to Sydney.

Pt Narayan Bhatt ji was one of the official priests to welcome Shri Modi ji and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. PM Modi was welcomed with PURNA KUMBHA by chanting Veda Mantras during grand function with Indian Community in Australia





With chants of "Modi, Modi" filling the air inside Sydney's Qudos Bank Arena, the Prime Minister hailed the growing ties between the two countries, saying that it is the local Indian diaspora that has helped take the relationship to another level.

Modi ji said

"Our lifestyles may be different but now yoga also connects us. We have been connected due to cricket for long. But now tennis and films are also connecting us. We might prepare food in different manners but Masterchef is connecting us now'.

HHS PUBLICATIONS

Divya Darshan - Divya Darshan is a quarterly magazine released by the Hindu Heritage Society, dedicated to promoting Hindu culture, spirituality, and values.

The magazine serves as a platform for sharing knowledge, insights, and perspectives on various aspects of Hinduism. Divya Darshan features articles, interviews, and scholarly pieces written by experts and enthusiasts in the field, covering topics such as Hindu philosophy, mythology, rituals, festivals, and social issues.

It aims to provide readers with a deeper understanding of Hindu traditions and their relevance in the modern world. The magazine also showcases inspiring stories of individuals who embody the principles of Hinduism in their lives and make a positive impact on society.

Divya Darshan is a valuable resource for those seeking to explore and connect with their Hindu heritage, fostering a sense of pride, identity, and spiritual growth among readers.

AMRIT KALASH -

Amrit Kalash, a Hindu religious radio program hosted by Pt Jagdish Maharaj, is a divine source of spiritual nourishment for listeners. The program offers a rich tapestry of religious facts, captivating stories, devotional songs, and soul-stirring bhajans that resonate with the hearts of the audience.

Pt Jagdish Maharaj, with his profound knowledge and wisdom, enlightens listeners about various aspects of Hinduism, guiding them on a spiritual journey filled with meaning and purpose.

The program goes beyond entertainment, featuring insightful interviews with prominent Hindu religious leaders, who share their deep understanding of scriptures and offer valuable insights into spiritual practices.

Additionally, Amrit Kalash serves as a valuable resource for devotees seeking guidance on performing poojas, providing clear instructions and guidelines to ensure the correct observance of rituals and ceremonies. Through this divine platform, Pt Jagdish Maharaj spreads the essence of Hinduism, fostering a deeper connection with the divine and inspiring individuals to embrace spirituality in their daily lives.

Amrit Kalash is a beacon of light that illuminates the path of seekers, nourishing their souls with the wisdom and devotion of Hindu traditions.

Simple Dipawali Puja - Conducted by Pt Narayan Bhatt, showcasing the Step by Step procedure on conducting Diwlai POojan. Kindly assisted by Ptji's Family.

Online diwali youtube (channel)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CLcmiOORcl&t=16s>

List of booklets published by HHS so far

- 1- Yearly Calendars (Hindu Festival Dates)
- 2- Our Great Sages - 2004
- 3- Satya Narayan Vrat katha (Hindi version) 2006
- 4- Vishnu Sahastra Naamam 2006
- 5- FAQ in Hinduism- 2007
- 6- Panchdev Puja vidhi (Hindi version) 2010
- 7- My daily pooja english hindi version 2011
- 8- Panchdev Puja vidhi (English version) 2011
- 9- Saral Bhajanaawali-2012
- 10- Satya Narayan Vrat Katha (English version) 2013

Most of above publication is available at the link below.

<https://hinduheritage.com.au/online-resources>

Photo Gallery



Pundits Shri Jagdish Maharaj Ji (left) and Shri Narayan Bhatt Ji (Right) with local Mayor



Shrimati Lalita Singh manning the Archana Table for Yajmaans

Past Events celebrated by HHS



Havan Yagna at Hindu Heritage Society Puja Function



Past Events celebrated by HHS



Memories Past Events celebrated by HHS





Memories Past Events celebrated by HHS

Memories Past Events celebrated by HHS



Hindu Heritage Society (HHS) has organised A BRAHMAN PUROHIT SAMMELAN (seminar) in association with Brahman Purohit Mahasabha and Australian Council of Hindu Clergy on 7th October 2012 first time in Sydney, Australia. This Seminar was intended only for the practicing priests aiming to be extended to the wider community in future. Priests from Sydney and Canberra attended the seminar.





Real life Durga Ma Guffa (Cave)

diorama built for participants to experience divine energy of Mata



Annual Durga puja celebrations of Hindu
Heritage Society in Sydney

Annual celebrations of HHS



सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥

**sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śharaṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣhayiṣhyāmi mā śhuchaḥ**



Hindu Heritage Society conduct Maha Saraswati pooja eve year for youth and children. We pray to Goddess Saraswati to give us pure knowledge which is needed to take the right steps in our lives. We pray to her to sharpen our intellect and improve our memory.

Most importantly, puja of Mata Saraswati is beneficial to all of us in our path to increase our spiritual awareness.





















Hindu Heritage Society Inc. Presents 25th Annual Durga maha Pooja
2023

Invitation

Hindu Heritage Society Australia cordially invites you and your family to grace the above program.

When: Saturday 21st October 2023 from : 6 PM

Venue:- Lurnea Community Hub, (**Phillips Park**) 66 Hill Rd, Lurnea NSW 2170

Program for the evening

- **Durga Puja:** 6:00 pm -7:00 pm- by Yajmaans (**please be on time**)
- **Archana & offerings:** 7:00 pm – 7:30 pm – by everyone.
- **(Puja thali @\$25.00 will be available for offering at the venue. Also, if not attending personally, you can send your details to be included in the Sankalp)**
- **Kanya Puja & Chalisa path:** 7:30pm -8.00 pm – by Yajmaans.
- **Devi Bhajans** 8:00 pm-9:30 pm by Sydney's prominent singers
- **Aarati** 9:30 pm

For sponsorships, (to become Yajman) please contact one of the below:

- ♦ Malti Maharaj-0403020471
- ♦ Radhika Bhatt- 0406511132
- ♦ Pushpa Kumar- 0419121923

www.hinduheritage.org.au

Let's sing glory of Adishakti together during Maha Navratra
All Devotees, their families and friends are most welcome to join.

Prasad and Maha prasad will be available.

Free community event



My name is Ashutosh Sharma (21yo) and I have been participating in the Hindu Community since childhood including HHS under the guidance of Pt Narayan Bhatt.

I received Hindustani Classical training from Balram Dass Guruji and have expanded this knowledge across a variety of music genres and instruments.

Today I specialise in Vocals, Keyboard and Harmonium and cater to a wide variety of Music Forms from Devotional, classical, contemporary, Bollywood and more.

Ashutosh Sharma

I and the Sydney Dholis Music Group are blessed and look forward to do Mata Ki Chowki this Navratri for HHS. "



CHALO MATA KE DHAM

Hindu Heritage Society is proud to announce that this years Devi Chauki will be presented by Mr Ashutosh Sharma accompanied by the very talented DHOLI group on Saturday 21st October 2023.

See you all their.

JAI MATA KI



Your feedback

Hi Pandit ji, Here is our feed back: We were honoured and thoroughly enjoyed being part of 25th anniversary celebration of Hindu Heritage Society which was a wonderful evening which began by invoking blessing of our Gurus.

There was excellent entertainment in the form of soulful bhajans and dance performances depicting our amazing culture. The evening was a beautiful culmination of colour, music, Melodie's & dance. Congratulations to Panditji & Radhikaji & the entire team on this milestone for keeping our vibrant culture alive.

Best wishes from Rajendra, Anu Jalpota and family



It was a pleasure to be recognised at the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of

[Hindu Heritage](#) Society on Saturday

8 July, 2023 in Sydney.

Congratulations to the HHS for the great achievements for the community in the last 25 years.

Master Indar Nair ji



(NHSA).

Mala Mehta OAM
President/Honorary Founder/Hindi Teacher
IABBV Hindi School Inc. (IBNID: 91)
NSW DET Community Language Schools
Committee Member Modern Languages Teachers Association (MLTA)
Chair & Founding Board Member Women's Shed Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Inc.
Committee Member Police and Community Youth Club (PCYC)

Our grateful thanks to you, Sukendra ji, Pandit Narayan Bhatt ji and Sunil Misra ji for your warm invitation to attend the 25th Anniversary of the Hindu Heritage Society and Guru Purnima on Sat 8 July at 5pm at the Don Moore Community Centre

North Rocks Rd & Farnell Avenue. Carlingford NSW 2118.

IABBV Hindi School is honoured that the Hindu Heritage Society In Collaboration with Diaspora Foundation (New Delhi) will be recognising the commitment and dedication of our school, teachers and educators with an award as well as a special mention in the Special Edition magazine, Divya darshan.



Natyanivedan: A school of Indian Classical Dancing - Bharatanatyam

2.7% of the Australian Population follow Hindu Dharma which is the 3rd largest dharma followed in our country. This is only possible because of certain communities work voluntarily to uphold our dharma and have successfully passed on to our next generation Hindu Heritage Society Inc Australia was founded in 1998 by Pandith Narayan Bhatt ji and Pandith Jagadish Maharaj, two renowned Hindu scholars and practitioners who have helped Hindus in Australia to come together for many practices and celebrations.

Natyanivedan takes pride in being support of this organisation for many years. we are humbled to have received an award for our contribution to teaching and practicing the oldest form of traditional dancing Bharathanatyam in Sydney community. Every student and parent of Natyanivedan are humbled by this gesture.

Students of Natyanivedan Tarika, Simran, Vanshika, Manognya, Shrimayi, Diya, Anika, Haripriya, Anonna, Alivia and Rachna danced for Ganesh Vandana and Guru Ashtakam at sil-



We have received many well wishes by different social media and here are some of them.

John Ram

A top class event-thank you for arranging such a magnificent programme. A truly amazing event befitting an exceptional organisation.

Vijai Singhal

Beautiful function. I attended it.

Akila Ramarathinam

Excellent Program

Disha Midha

Many

congratulations

🎉 such a remarkable contribution to society 🙏

Kusum Singh

Wonderful pictures And beautiful program as well.

Rita Narayan

That's awesome!

Congratulations ! To Maharaj and Radhika for their contribution to the society. 🙏 🙏 🙏 ❤️ ❤️

Anil Kant

Pride of our sanatan Vedic universal jay shree ram.

Beautifull orchestral presentations and lovely singing.

Kushma Maharaj

Awesome. Very beautiful setup. Great job **Prem Maharaj**. Well organized. Keep up the good work. Enjoyed watching.

Thanks for sharing. ❤️ ❤️ 🙏

HHS thanks for your feedback and encouragement



THANK YOU

Hindu Heritage Society is thrilled to share the resounding success and exceptional feedback we received from the viewers and participants of our Guru Purnima Celebration and 25th Silver Jubilee. The festivities, held on 8th July 2023, marked a momentous milestone for our organization, and the outpouring of appreciation has left us humbled and grateful.

The outpouring of positive feedback has reaffirmed the significance of our mission to preserve and promote our cultural heritage.

For a quarter-century, the Hindu Heritage Society has strived to foster unity, knowledge, and compassion within our community, and the Silver Jubilee Celebration was a testament to the enduring spirit of our organization.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the viewers, participants, volunteers, and supporters who contributed to the success of these momentous celebrations. Your unwavering support and enthusiasm have been instrumental in making these events truly remarkable.

The Guru Purnima Celebration, combined with our 25th Silver Jubilee, showcased the power of tradition, unity, and the unwavering dedication of our team. Together, we have forged bonds that transcend generations, carrying forward the rich legacy of our cultural heritage.

As we bask in the glow of these memorable celebrations, we are filled with renewed vigour to continue our journey of enriching lives and nurturing the cultural fabric of our community. Your feedback and encouragement have strengthened our resolve to continue making a positive impact in the years to come.

Once again, thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Here's to many more years of celebration and cultural preservation with leadership from Pdt Narayan Bhatt and Pdt Jagdish Maharaj.

With heartfelt appreciation

Hindu Heritage Society

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Sanghe Shakti: Kalau Yuge (Strength In Union In Kaliyuga)



Hindu Cultural And Education Centre

Hindu Cultural And Education Centre or HEACC! We are a group who share a common vision of creating a comprehensive educational and cultural centre that embodies the essence of Hindu philosophy, teachings and practices. Our goal is to provide a platform for students, scholars, researchers, and the wider community to learn, grow, and connect with the rich heritage of Hinduism.

Our campus will feature a large immersive cultural centre that showcases the diversity and richness of Hindu culture. Here, visitors can participate in cultural events, attend lectures and workshops, and experience the art, music, dance, and food of India. Our aim is to create a vibrant community hub that celebrates the beauty and richness of Hindu culture.

Finally, our campus will include large sports grounds, where students can engage in physical activities and sports, and develop their physical fitness and teamwork skills. We believe that a sound mind and a sound body go hand in hand, and our sports facilities reflect this belief.

We are excited about the possibilities that our Hindu campus project offers, and we invite you to join us on this journey. Whether you are a student, a parent, a teacher, a researcher, or a member of the wider community, we welcome you to be a part of our community and help us build a better future for all. Thank you for your support!

JOIN OUR JOURNEY

\$21 M PROJECT COST

15 M LAND COST

MISSION
To provide a holistic education that integrates Hindu values, culture, and traditions with a modern curriculum, sparking a love for learning and service to the community.

FEATURES

- Includes a library and books containing Hindu knowledge and their insights.
- High, traditional, and modern architecture.
- Multi-functional centre for all.
- Provides a platform for all to share their knowledge and experiences.

LOCATION
79 Saunders road, Oakville NSW 2163
15 Acres land, Sydney, Australia.

HEACC SANATANA
A HINDU EDUCATION & CULTURAL CENTRE FOR ALL

KEEP CONNECTED WITH US
For more information please visit: www.heacc.org.au
Scan for link to donation page

HINDU EDUCATION & CULTURAL CENTRE
- High Institute Brand

Knowledge is the Supreme Strength